fields
with
no
fences

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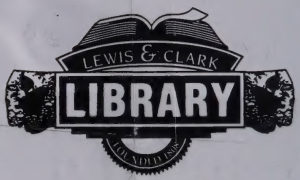

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The title for this book is borrowed from Heidi Hart's poem on page 5.

FIELDS WITH NO FENCES

WRITING BY STUDENTS & TEACHERS IN THE SCHOOLS OF MONTANA 1983-1984

Montana Arts Council
Poets & Writers in Schools/Communities Program

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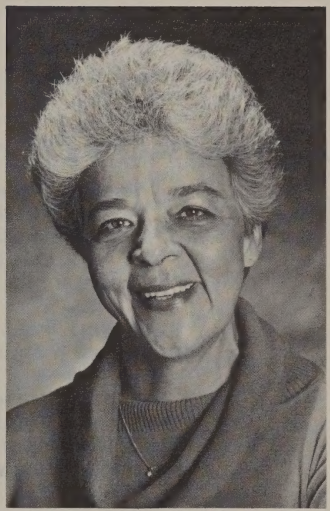
HELENA, MONTANA 59601

Young writers need friends like Pat Simmons. For over ten years, Pat has been a loving and tireless advocate for writers and for the cause of literature in Montana. For the dozens of us who worked with her—and the hundreds of classrooms full of Montana schoolchildren she touched indirectly—she made life better.

From her office at the Arts Council in Missoula, Pat designed and managed and rooted for the residencies that brought poets and fiction writers to schools all over the state... giving students the chance to work with professional writers, and giving the writers a chance to work for pay at crucial times in their careers. In 1979 she organized the First Book Award, which offers book-length publication for a Montana writer each year. More recently, Pat's worked on an Arts Council project to set up future fellowships for Montana writers, and one to better promote and distribute their work in Montana and around the West.



Pat Simmons

With the moving of the Arts Council offices to Helena, Pat will pass on her files to a new Artist Services Director. All of us—from writers-in-the-schools, to Book Award judges and all who participated, to advisory panel members, teachers and administrators, to the children in Montana schools whose writings have graced these anthologies—take this chance to thank her, and to let her know that her work has mattered a great deal to a great many of us. For all that she's imagined and made happen, we dedicate this year's anthology, with affection, to Pat.

Scott Davidson
David Long

You have two long braids
that bounce against your back
as you run through fields with no fences.
Then you have long flowing hair
that falls into the milk bucket
as your pet cow wiggles around.
You have hair so prim and proper to bun
that you don't dare to move for fear it will fall
and the preacher might see.
You have tangles so messy
that your hands get caught
in an effort to remove sleep from your eyes
in the cold, frosty room.
I believe, but I open my eyes.
You have white, crisp hair
that falls sometimes in short strands
onto elegant hunched shoulders.
I believed.

Heidi Hart
Bozeman Senior High
Bozeman

DRIVING AFTER DARK

You swerve to the side of the road.
The skunk walks calmly across,
then a little farther on
the rabbit
the porcupine
and then out of nowhere
the big muley doe is right
in front of you.
You jolt, your lights go out.
Front fender and grill are bent,
and there's the old doe
still flopping.
You slit her throat
and face yourself.

Scott Purdum
Sweet Grass County High School
Big Timber

THE LAUGHTER OF THE LESSER LYNX

I see you and your civilization
And do not like it.
Because of you the earth is burned
and the sky is hidden.
I have legs that get me where
I want to go.
But you seem to have lost yours
to those things shaped like the sun
You see them as wheels
I see them as trouble
Tall one, you think
you are smarter than the rest of us
That shows us what you know
Nothing
If you are smart
why do you do the things you do?
If you agree to come back with us
and leave what's yours behind
we will bring the earth back to life
we will find the sky
we will show you love
we will kill the monster called
civilization.

LaVonne Lambert
Poplar High School
Poplar

ODE TO A FRIEND

You come in
when the whole
world
has gone
out.
When I'm with
you,
I feel
like a
lost pup who
has found
a home.
You
know how
to solve
my
problems.
Like a
tape recorder,
you'll listen
without
interrupting.
When I
push play,
you
talk about
my problems
with me.
You don't make
me feel
childish
even when
I
want to
go punk-out
with
the groupies.

Kristy Heberle
Belgrade High School
Belgrade

MORNING STROLL

As we walked along the pine-scented road
morning air filled our lungs
like helium balloons.
We smiled as we walked to our favorite spot,
knowing no one could see us.
We remembered the time we saw sixteen
white-tailed deer, their tails waving
like surrender flags.

Sharla Matthews
C.M. Russell High School
Great Falls

FROGS

Frogs, frogs
flirting, flirting
on their lily pads.
Mom says no,
but you know Dad,
and there is no silence in the night.

Anonymous
St. Mary's Jr. High
Livingston

BRAIN CYCLE POEM

My brain is like a collapsed tennis ball
A collapsed tennis ball is like orange peels with no orange inside
Orange peels with no orange inside is like a clock without numbers
A clock without numbers is like a dictionary without definitions
A dictionary without definitions is like my brain when I forget

Dwight Miller
Bigfork Elementary
Bigfork

MY FOX IN A BOX

When I got a black fox in a box
he was eating red socks
and was standing on blocks
and he could talk
He said
I could be magic and I was
Sweet.

Jennifer Lantis
Grandey School
Terry

LONELINESS

Loneliness is a stranger
maybe a loner
taking a snooze on a park bench
or drinking booze out of
a crusty paper bag, unable
to go to bed in a warm room,
his only friends the trees and cars.
Or loneliness is a ghost town.
The only visitors are wind and dust,
the rickety stairs wearing away from time.

Lisa Evenson
Havre Jr. High
Havre

Poetry sometimes is a thought behind locked doors.
Other times, it is like a never empty cup.
Ever ready to fill you, as long as you pay the price
Time, time is to poetry as rain is to a plant.
Real or imaginary, poetry takes you where you want to
Yours to share or yours to hold like a precious stone.

Dan Raymond O'Brien
Poplar High School
Poplar

ODE TO THE ROSE

I have seen you
you stand out
like a brillantly
colored building
in the middle
of
a smog-filled
city
Each silken drop
of dew
which falls from
your petals
turns
into a brillantly
colored
diamond.
I have seen you
you smell like
an orchard in
spring.
You are
not known
during the winter,
though your
bud sits
dormant under
the snow,
you await
your time
in life when
you fill
all that
beholds you.
You are
not a
diamond
nor a
ruby.
You are
simple
you are
the
rose.

Debbie Cox
Bigfork High School
Bigfork

SKY SCRAPER POEM

Hitting the sky
For it's so
high
Grateful for
being supported
by beams
reflecting the sun
light off of
its mirrored
windows
Trying to
reach higher
to meet the
moon but
for the
clouds that
block it off
swaying in
the wind
ready to
fall from
its high peak
As it falls
it remembers
its old memories

Randy Whitehead
North Jr. High
Great Falls

Going up in an airplane
you jump out to nothing
then glide down like a snowflake
until you hit the ground.

Richard Bleskin
Meadow Lark Elementary
Great Falls

PARIS

Afraid to get off the bus, I sat there staring,
staring at the boy and girl walking down the street,
at the sun reflecting off their black leather clothes,
and at the chain around the girl's neck
attached to a bracelet worn by her male companion.
His hair was tinted the same bright pink as hers.
I walked with my friend off the bus and into the motel,
quickly, oh so quickly, so as not to be caught by a street peddler.
"Hey, Americano, you want clothes? I have good prices!"
He tries to sell us some sweaters,
but we don't look his way.
"Ooo la la, Americanos," he says.
Irritated, but amused, we are afraid of the big city
with its Tower de Eiffle and its Arch de Triumph
and the ten-story shopping mall.
Up, up, up we went on the escalators,
passing the expensive clothing and perfume stores
all bristling with customers,
until finally reaching the top.
And on the roof a great view, a view of the whole city
and of its people—white, black, yellow—
all doing their own thing
whether it be peddling sweaters or perfume
or being chained to one's mate
or sitting on a bench
on the roof of a ten-story mall
next to a bald man feeding pigeons
and then kissing them...
and finally strangling them.
Everyone must do his own thing
in a big city like Paris.

Tina Warner
Dawson County High School
Glendive

SHARING

Here we sit on the couch in the living room,
sharing a bag of pork rinds,
watching the fights.
Suddenly I'm a young child again,
waiting anxiously for you to come home
after a long day of nothingness
while you were at work.
You walk in the door
and I run to your arms
where tender kisses and warm hugs
always awaited me.
Your thermos and lunch box
sit on the table, just as always,
waiting for my hungry hands
to rummage through and find
something left for me to eat—
empty sandwich wraps
a banana peel,
an empty container where once
was hot chicken noodle soup.
There, under the container,
lay a single pork rind.
I handed it to you, asking,
"Daddy, what is this?"
And you said, 'Mmmmmm. Here,"
breaking it into two pieces
and then handing one to me.
"Taste it," you said.
"It's good stuff!"
Now I hand you a chip,
wondering, "Is it lost?
Or just waiting to be shared?"

Paulette Larsen
Project for Alternative Learning
Helena

TO THE SUN

So what happened
to the freedom
of riding
riding on the back
of an illogical idea
that idea
simple as a dragon
that would take us
to the sun?

We could ride
our dragons
jump from star to star,
run in the sweet grass
from reality,
but it catches us
on our jouney
to the sun.

Cheryl Smith
Belgrade High School
Belgrade

ODE TO WATER

Because it has a life of its own
and reflects what it sees.
Because it can swallow things whole
or wash away time.
Because it fills empty spaces
and colors like sun.
Because it runs away laughing
or dozes in sand,
Because it sings its own music.

Linda Nelson
Bigfork High School
Bigfork

THINGS I'VE DONE

The smell of the sweating horse
as you unsaddle at the end of the day.
The smell of a hot iron
resting on a bellowing calf.
I remember those mornings
staring at the sunrise, and evenings
staring at the sunset, my back and butt
so sore that it hurt to walk.
Just the same, it felt good to be back
in the saddle again. It's the feeling
of being free that rests on you most,
the sight of land splattered with cattle.

T.J. Shaw
Wibaux High School
Wibaux

Where were you when you were twelve?
Were you sitting at home watching television,
or down the street stealing the mail
for Christmas money? Maybe you were with Pete
who lives down the road, making funny faces
in the mirror, or up on the porch
ready to shoot the next pigeon
that landed with your B.B. gun, the big gray
one sitting on the ground, pecking at the
seeds as it spreads its wings, and only
one shot left. It comes down fluttering
its wings, and you taking aim. Is that
where you were when you were twelve?

Mike Morgan
Anderson School
Bozeman

To get
over my mountain you have to
see
a
witch
in a

small
adobe house riding a
donkey. You have to walk
down a steep trail
leaving behind
every book you have ever
read.

Tosawi Saddler
Arlee Jr. High
Arlee

THE ATTIC

Dusty,
dark,
damp,
filled not only with objects,
but with memories.
Faded photographs,
old diaries,
baby clothes,
pressed flowers,
wilted not with age
but with memories.

Lisa Doll
Dawson County High School
Glendive

Grave of old wisdom
dressed in feather capes and oil-skin hats
circles my sleep

this dream carrier
like bears around a cabin
or coyotes around a fire
paws wrapped
with soft leather

shuffling leaves
and pine cones
just outside the light

in a rim of darkness
fire born of stone
so that I hear them barely
and
see them not at all
something more than mystery
perched on a blade of grass

more than stone
more than a dream of peace
and gathered flesh

Joe Peterson
Bozeman Senior High
Bozeman

When I die I want to die
on top of a rockpile
with my hand holding a rock
and dirt in my other hand
and the hot wind blowing
across my body like the wind
that blows by rocks. I want
to die on my own place
where the tractors go by
when they farm or combine.
I want to die on a hot summer
Monday when we start work
in the fields.

Dale Cornell
Turner High School
Turner

RELEQUARY

I vision a cluster of old furrow people
standing mourning...
A relequary in different form
is placed high on a firm, table-like framework.
The old bleached hair dances in the wind.
The natives go back to feast in his honor.

Kirby King
Hays-Lodgepole High School

WAR

War
Hell in the tropics
Tanks and planes
move across
bombarding people

War
People lying everywhere
Dead or wounded
Crying for help
Death is everywhere
Never lets go

War
Men, women and children
Shuffling to safety
Wait, there is no safety

War
There is a crack
Turn to see a friend
Lying dead on the street
Blood all over
Fire and smoke
It burns

War

Dennis Christiansen
Poplar High School
Poplar

ODE TO BOY GEORGE

For the picture that wakes me every morning
like the winter waking to spring
For his great ways that light my smile
like bright paint on a silvery moon
For his awesome bod and great make-up that fills
the sky with dreamy wishes of parakeet wings

Kim Jenneskens
Bigfork Elementary
Bigfork

When I woke up
I was a monkey.
My favorite food is
bananas.
When I get tired
I will swing, swing
out of school.
My friends are the
Orangutans loud as thunder.
We apes beat our hairy chests
Like some boys.
And we have horrible itches.

Sandi Johnson
Granville Stuart Elementary
Deer Lodge

THE WACKO TUPPERWARE PARTY

When I was a baby my mother took me to a tupperware
party where there were many piggies.
One was so fat and clumsy the ladies called her Twinkletoes.
Twinkletoes took a bellyflop
into the punchbowl, tearing off all her fingernails
and causing her to go wacko.

People who become wacko
go to tupperware
parties. They paint their fingernails
gold and silver and have tattoos of piggies
on their cheeks and even if their bellies flop
over their pants, especially the lady called Twinkletoes,

they don't wear girdles, except Twinkletoes,
whose girdle goes wacko
when she puts it on. The bellyflop
she does into a tupperware
bowl makes the other piggies
laugh into their painted fingernails.

Craig Erickson
Turner Jr. High
Turner

I live in a pool
with nothing to do.
My body is nothing
and my toes are creatures.
I don't move.
My eyes are planets
and my feet are paper
My teeth are glue
and my arms are wind
My hands are deserts
My tongue the sea
My fingers are rocks
My hair is weeds
My mouth is rubber
My nose is a rocket.

Aaron Varnice
West Elementary
Laurel

ODE TO THE CLOCK

Ode to the clock
who ticks a lot
you tick all day
you tick all night
you tell us the time day and night
you go all year
day and night but you never stop
I feel sorry for you
You sit on the wall
all day
all night
you never die
you go for years
you go for a thousand days and nights
but you never stop
you just sit there
day and night
when the power goes out, you finally stop
you fall behind thanks a lot
but you come back on
we set you back on time
then you sit there
all day
all night
you never stop
You're my pal, clock
you're all over, clock
you're in my house
you're in my rooms at school
you're in my dad's school room
you're in all the buildings in the world
poor old clock
you will always be around
you will die with me

Robby Potts
Washington Middle School
Miles City

MY UNCLE ED

My Uncle Ed
was hit by a locomotive.
He did not look both ways.

Gavin Williams
Graff Elementary
Laurel

POPLAR

Pilgrims of this town are the old people
The old people of this town are wise and
Plentiful, they talk about when they were in
Their best life growing days, how things changed
Time after time year by year however we
Rip time off the wall and then take the seconds.

Dale Running Bear
Poplar High School
Poplar

I hear the frog gulp
as he eats a juicy fly.

I see a bear running for his life
from a lynch mob of bees.

Steve Pearson
Granville Stuart Elementary
Deer Lodge

History is a Nytol Sedative
A Nytol sedative is like a radio with worn-out batteries
A radio with worn-out batteries is like a musty closet
A musty closet is like a mudpie
A mudpie is like History.

Shon Fieber
Ronan High School
Ronan

THE TREE

The tree is a lonely thing,
it does nothing but stand almost motionless
and think
it thinks for hours, days, weeks, years
Some trees live hundreds of years
doing nothing but thinking, silently keeping
one watchful eye on the earth below.
The trees know the answers to all
our problems, know the answers to all
our questions.
They try to talk, to tell us what they know
but they only speak in indecipherable whispers
when the wind blows through their leaves,
in creaks and groans as they
sway back and forth
It can do nothing but stand almost motionless
and think, and try to speak to us in
words that if we could listen to we'd
understand.

Jeb VanDenburg
Bigfork High School
Bigfork

MEMEMTO

Like a fossil on a stone
I sat surrounded by wind
and the damp night air

Listening to the hush
of skilled breath
wing by

as the moon tilted
like the arms of a clock,
it touched me in some center

of my thought
of my dreams
in some clear moment
of my sleep.

Matt Trape
Outlook High School
Outlook

I was what was known as a "normal" child.
People said I'd go far.
I was rather plain, rather mild,
not the kind of kid who'd go wreck the car
or otherwise disappoint.
I grew up fast,
always expected to be the best,
never allowed to be like the rest.
But what did I gain
as a "perfect" kid,
my parents tight reign
a kind of lid?

Brian Keys
Dawson County High School
Glendive

A LITTLE PLACE OUTSIDE OF LAS VEGAS

Pop's Place
is a little black
hang-out outside
of Las Vegas, people
with punk clothes and
dusty hair, and every two feet
a slot machine.
It had been a terrible
experience. My parents
had just got a divorce
and we wore dingy
dusty clothing
and four hot dogs and
two large Sprites
cost $8.50.

Cole Eckenstein
Lewis and Clark Elementary
Great Falls

STRAW

Straw has a hard life.
It grows through the wind and rain.
The sun beats down on it, scorching it.
As soon as it is mature
it is either eaten by a cow
or by a combine. It is ground up
and then it is decomposed
by bugs and the weather.
The following year it is sucked up
by its younger generation for nutrients.
The straw lies peacefully, it lies where it wishes,
the wind blowing it from one place
to another.

Jack Tooke
Turner High School
Turner

BEHIND THE DOORS

Behind door one I saw
Two million buffalo roaming the plains
Behind the second door I saw
One thousand Bald Eagles flying gracefully
Behind the third door I saw
Millions of Indians playing freely
Behind the fourth door I saw
Christopher Columbus land in the West Indies
Behind door five I saw
People die in World War II
Behind door six I saw
Thousands of people die in Vietnam
Behind the seventh door I saw
A nuclear bomb go off and
then everything was gone!!

Larry Wagoner
Washington Middle School
Miles City

SUN SHADOW

People who lived in the hills
looked upwards, mouths gaping,
chattering among themselves
like squirrels exchanging insults.
Far away, a distant cry
pierced this strange twilight:
"Hey, George, look at that!"
"Yeah, I see it.
Ain't it the damndest thing?"
Dogs began to whimper and howl,
cats tore through the houses, then hid
under the secure beds of their masters.
A bewildered coyote began
its evening hunt in the morning.
A shadow swept over the entire land
faster than lightning,
more awesome than the loud thunder.
Cries of utter fascination rang,
then whoops and whistles as all gazed
at the great hole in the sky.
A few stars peeked through
the curtain of darkness.
Quickly as it came,
the shadow passed.

Monte Annear
Bozeman Senior High
Bozeman

I WAS BORN

I was born in a thousand
grumpy lettuce patches,
and I was never allowed
to wobble, wiggle, clink
or sprinkle in a balloon
and I was never welcome
in the alphabet.

Melanie Kindsfather
West Elementary
Laurel

WHEN IT'S POW-WOW TIME

Everybody rushes. My mom brushes her hair
and braids it, then puts on her buckskin dress
with her beaded moccasins. My dad puts on his bustle
with its beaded belt and long, buckskin straps.
My sister can't find her shawl and says,
"I can't dance without it."
My little brother doesn't want to put on his paint
and get into his suit.
I like to dance and I hurry to put on my braid ties.
At last, everybody is ready to go and climb into the van
and head for Ft. Belknap Agency where we will dance
and kick up our heels all the long night through.

Collaborative Poem
4th Grade
Hays-Lodgepole Elementary

Under a thick layer of dead leaves
you might find a squiggledy, wiggledy earthworm,
a hard-working inchworm, a friendly, fuzzy caterpillar,
or an optimistic grasshopper
looking for a blade of green grass.
You might see a sneaky, silly centipede,
a merrily marching millipede, a fluttering fly,
or a gooey, slimy, disgusting slug.
You might find a scorpion with a black stinging tail,
a leach all ready to leech you up,
or a black shiny beetle with a hard, brittle shell.
Under a thick layer of dead leaves
you might find the root of a cottonwood tree
or you might find a wrinkled candybar wrapper
some careless person has left behind
or you might even find the skin of a fast-growing snake
under a thick layer of dead leaves.

Collaborative Poem
Grade 3
Monforton School
Bozeman

DEATH IS WARM

Death is warm
like a shallow pond
in july.
Yet, it is cold like steel
in january.
Death is soft
like spring grass
yet it is hard
like cold steel
Death is sweet
like nectar
From a fruit tree.
Yet, it is tasteless
like cold steel.
Death sings many notes like
the wind
yet it has only
one note like the cold
ring of steel.
Death looks beautiful
like a glacier lily
yet we fear
the beautiful.

Anonymous
Bigfork High School
Bigfork

WORRYING

Whenever you feel like worrying,
some places are better than others.
You might go out to the big oak tree
and hope nobody's there.
You can climb to the top and worry a lot,
UNLESS there's a tree frog already there
  worrying about a shortage of flies.
Or you might go under the bed
with all your stuffed animals
and a few leftover cookies
from the Christmas party you had for Baby Jesus,
UNLESS there's some mice there
  worrying about traps.
Or you might simply go in your closet
and hide under some stuffed dogs
and worry about whether or not
there's a ghost in there with you
UNLESS there really is and he's worrying about
  a shortage of people to scare.
Or you might crawl under the haystack
UNLESS there's already a snake there
  curled up and worrying about a shortage of rats.
Or you might crawl up in your mom's lap
UNLESS your brother's already there
worrying about worrying.

Third Grade Collaborative
Graff Elementary
Laurel

COLORS AND FEELINGS

Black is being alone
  in the dark cellar
  except for the kidnappers and ghosts.
Red is when you break
  your mother's vase
  and her face turns hot as fire.
Blue is when you think of
  someone who's gone
  and your eyes burst into tears.

Collaborative poem
Anderson School Kindergarten
Bozeman

EVENING IN OAXACA

Sitting
at a sidewalk cafe
in a zocolo
beneath the Monte Alban Ruins

watching
naked feathered dancers
flex their sweating muscles
in repetitious ancient ritual

above me
festive lights replace the stars.
My heart hesitates.

Standing
before our table is
a little brown-eyed nina
selling onyx creatures
to fill her empty stomach.
"50 pesos, Senor?"
"50 pesos, Senorita?"
My heart pauses.

All around me
dark and swarthy young men
mingle musky smells
with delicate gardenia
dying on our table.
My heart rushes faster.

Fire-breathing ninos,
shirtless, flaunting youth,
blowing kerosene for pesos.
My stomach turns.

From across the table
my father smiles on me.

Sarah Schladweiler
Bozeman Senior High
Bozeman

ALLEY CAT POEM

An alley cat is a cat who has no family.
He gets his food from garbage cans.
He sleeps in alleys.
He's big, but he's usually skinny.
He eats meat and stuff that he has to find
in an old pizza wrapper.
He has long fur because he can't keep it trimmed.

He is strong and fast and runs after other cats.
They hiss when they see him coming.
They put up their backs and growl.
At night, he's always hungry,
and he gets cold in the winter.
He yowls and yowls and growls at the bright, bright moon
and all the other cats listen.

Collaborative Poem
Grade 2
Monforton School
Bozeman

WALKING

Birds talk back and forth
Mist fills the air
Two pickups meet on the street
The streets are paved with mud and gravel
The mailman leaves for Hogeland
Tumbleweeds clutter the earth
The sky resembles a carpet of pillows
all smashed together
The railroad ties seem infested with new life
The old pickup roars out of town
The breeze is cooling my hands
Alan walks into a mud puddle while writing
Today seems to be preparing us
for tomorrow's sunshine

Tami Jenks
Turner High School
Turner

DO YOU SEE ME?

Do you see me?
Do you all help me?
My words are tied in one
with the great mountains
with the great rocks
with the great trees
tied in one with my body
and my heart.
Do you all help me
with supernatural power,
and you, day
and you, night.
All of you see me
one with this world.

Vanessa Vanderburg
Arlee Jr. High
Arlee

SPRING, COME BACK

Spring, come back
And pounce on winter
like a leopard on a tree stump
Spring, come back
Take the snow off the prairie
Off the new calves
Off the new lambs
Spring, come back
Let the bitterroots bloom
Let the baby birds hear
their parents' song
Let the children swim in sunshine
not in blue ice
Spring, come back

5th Grade Collaborative
Grandey School
Terry

TREES OF THE NIGHT

The trees stand like black bears in their shadows
The black bears in their shadows look like cars in the moonlight
Cars in the moonlight are like the nightmares of my mom
The nightmares of my mom are the edges of knives
The edges of knives are the trees standing.

Stoney Gordon
Bigfork High School
Bigfork

Six in the morning and the highway is silent.
At this hour everything is grey-blue,
between moonlight and the cold yellow eastern sky.
The Yellowstone is a black space between trees.
The coldest time of the day has everything
under a coat of frost.
The buckles on my overboots are icy
and they clink as I walk. The sound seems small
and far away. Under the barn light's quiet buzzing
the ewes watch silently from the fence by the creek.
Their eyes glow under the flashlight beam.
No lambs this time.
I close the gate and start back toward the house.
A bunch of sparrows sit in a line on a gate panel,
like the cowboys at the Wilsall rodeo
who sit on top of the Bank Bar and hang their feet
over the side. The yellow in the east
has turned red, and blue sky forms
around the edges of the glow.
Light strikes the Crazies, and they are an island
of pink and white snow over the blue shadows of timber.
They look unreal and close against the still dark sky.
I turn and walk toward the warmth inside the house.

Scott Franks
Sweet Grass County High School
Big Timber

ODE TO MY HEART

I love
my
heart
with its
bumpity-thump
It
gives
me
feelings
of sadness like a death
and
joy like finding $10
and it
lets
me
live
to be a
boy with joy
without a
heart
no life
would
live
not
even
love
which
we
need
too!
Bumpity-thump.

Bill Sellars
Granville Stuart Elementary
Deer Lodge

THE DAY YOU PULLED THE TRIGGER

On the day you pulled the trigger,
did you stop to think
how everyone would feel
when you decided that
there wasn't anything worth living for?
Did you stop to think
how Connie would be torn apart
after you wrote a note that said,
"She'll be happy now."
Did you stop to think
how everyone loved you
and really cared about you?
Did you stop to think
that even though you had problems
they could have been worked out?
I wish you had stopped to think
and think and think again and again,
because if you had, you'd be right here,
with the ones who love you,
right this minute,
right here in this world.

Dawn Tarske
Project for Alternative Learning
Helena

THE BITTER COLD

The bitter cold grabs your hands
and face, biting and nipping at them.
The wind whispers like a giant whale.
You try to run but the cold
gets in your lungs like a Siamese trap.
You start to shiver but a scorpion
takes your sense of movement away
like an egg in space
being swallowed.

Jimmy Winter
Granville Stuart Elementary
Deer Lodge

GERMANY

When I look back on that place
that it took a day to fly to,
I remember the tidy cities
and building-block villages,
the towering mountains
with an occasional fairy-tale castle
snuggled up against their walls.
I see once more the rolling hills
dotted with fat cattle,
resounding with their melancholy chorus.

It was a place of newness, a confusing place,
where people ate strange foods
and sang songs that were loud and raucous,
shaking the beer halls
with their drunken bellows
and speaking words I couldn't understand.

But the people were polite and friendly.
They shook hands for a greeting,
and everyone's children wanted to meet me
because I was from America.

It took a year
of watching and listening
before I learned to think and speak
in the long unbroken sentences of the man
who sold roasted almonds on the street corner.

Heidi Hermanson
Bozeman Senior High
Bozeman

BREAKING MY FIRST HORSE

On a hot summer day in July,
I saw the horse I was to break.
It was only a pony,
but still a long way from the ground
for a four-year-old.
Scared and trembling, I climbed on.
My dad held me on.
Then he let go.
I grabbed onto anything available
and held on tight,
but I only lasted a few seconds.
Landing mouth open in the dirt
isn't my idea of fun.
My dad called it cowboy dirt
and threw me back on.
If only he knew.

Kirk Ueland
Terry Jr. High
Terry

FIRST MEDITATION

Lying on the floor in an eastern sleep
I float to a rock in a forest plain
I've been there before

Warm winds blow against my face
I sleepwalk up a trail
I was there before

I walk into a room
where I find myself
lying on the floor
in an eastern sleep.

John Firehammer
Bozeman Senior High
Bozeman

She has run in the
hay, then
a horse came.
Next she ran
endless into the sky.

Hiding in the clouds, looking into
the
endless sky above the
new land
dreaming of
rivers sinking
in the earth's
crust
knowing how to
sing
over the
new land.

Shane Hendrickson
Arlee Jr. High
Arlee

ARE YOU THINKING?

after Ed Harkness

Are you thinking as you read this
about your assignment that was due
today? He said to write about bubbles
of imagination that float until they
break on your pencil tip
and fall upon the page,
glass pictures floating down
to break on your foot, and guns
shattering through the night as the
muffled bodies fall. Are you thinking
of your mother and dad when they fight,
their words come crashing to your ears
as the bottle they fought over falls
into your hands, and you wonder why
the clear liquid spills to the floor.

Angela Barnes
Plains Middle School
Plains

MY HIDEAWAY

My hideaway is full of trees
and bushes. Best of all, you can hear the creek
roaring and the trees blowing in the wind,
far away from people, cars and city life.

The sun beats down on you as if you were
a loaf of bread baking in the oven
as you lie on the wood and rocks
feeling the hardness of them both.

Heidi Boyer
W.K. Dwyer Intermediate
Anaconda

WATER WAR

The water is spraying
The children are screaming
with playful and happy terror
Then all is silent
The enemy approaches
And turns off the war
And the children plead
As if their bodies would dry out.

Julie Johnston
Arlee Jr. High
Arlee

THE ARCHER

He stands,
eyes on target,
bow in hand.
Up it comes,
shaft to string.
The string is drawn
back to his cheek.
He holds his breath,
releases the string.
The shaft is away.
He breathes a sigh.
He does well.
Best shot all day.

Bill Hopper
Dawson County High School
Glendive

Scott Davidson

Courtesy of *Anaconda Leader*

POPPY

He smelled like cigars
His head was shiny and bald
He had lost part of his thumb
in an accident with a machine
The stub was shiny and bald
too smooth without the nail.

He worked in the Brown shoe factory
red brick building with cobalt-
blue windows down by the tracks.

When he came home he was tired
but he sang to me anyway
and we danced
with my feet on his toes.

Kathy Tulley, teacher
Sweet Grass County High School
Big Timber

MY FAVORITE STUDENT

He arrives at 1:30, still clad in his sweats.
Bouncing up the stairs with his trumpet,
he tells us about his ice skating lesson,
doing an imaginary axel in the air.
He takes out his damaged instrument,
bubbling over with things to say.
But his father says,
"Stephen! Persist with your work!"
So he reluctantly opens his lesson book.
He plays wrong notes and rhythms.
He's going too fast,
turning red from improper breathing.
Someday he'll be a musician,
but will he ever be tamed in three-quarter time?

Esme Hassinger
Denton Jr. High
Denton

MOUNTAINS

The mountains are rugged like an elk's hide.
They stick out like giant tepees.
When the birds chirp in their nests
they sound like the screeching of trees
and you feel the wind brush up behind your back.

Shayne Skakles
W.K. Dwyer Intermediate
Anaconda

ME AND MOM

We talk, but we don't.
We listen, but we don't.
We do, but we don't.
How can we get anywhere?
There's so much misunderstanding.
It hurts at times,
because I could, but I don't.

Pam Spidel
Terry High School
Terry

I remember youth
pissing through a hole in the sky
to the other side.
I had never taken my past seriously
but I could not block out
the scraped knees and jeering laughter
and failing attitudes that were pinned to my jacket
for only my mother to read.
It's true I was really hoping there'd be
more time to grow old before this.
I lived in eternity
cultivating childhood anxieties where
upon steel bridges
my youth jumped.

Megan Shaw
Bozeman Senior High
Bozeman

WALKING TO SCHOOL

The morning is early with darkness
lingering on. There is the sound of a door
shutting and footsteps, a cool breeze blows
through your hair as you take your first steps
to school. A lonely, quiet feeling creeps
over you, the only sound being the crunch
of your own footsteps, and the occasional
moan and howl of dogs.

Doug Dockter
C.M. Russell High School
Great Falls

BLACK

The devil, black and bad,
with pitchfork in hand,
or dream of spaceships
passing by the moon, rotten cheese
see monsters dressed in black
like Dracula,
or dream of animals
like blackbirds, dragons or apes.

Mike Szafryk
Plains Middle School
Plains

JOY

Joy is a short fat old lady
with beautiful blond hair, laughing
singing and dancing
down an old country road.
Joy is the ice cream cone
the lady holds in her hand:
it's nice for a while
but it slowly melts away.

Lisa Freeman
Lewis and Clark Elementary
Great Falls

The grip of a wintery hand,
grabbing out and freezing you,
putting you in a wintery place
sending chills through your brain.
A kind of place you can't
escape from, freezing every part
of your body like you don't exist,
a place where nothing can harm you.

Cliff Rossberg
Meadow Lark Elementary
Great Falls

Colors of autumn
like ribbons tangled
into webs
prowl through the crisp
morning air

the way your heart
prowls through my heart
leaving it tangled,
at once crisp and alive
and leary of winter's raw edge
just around the corner.

Joni Phelps
Outlook High School
Outlook

A barren heart is like cold metal
Cold metal is like an empty smile
An empty smile is like a weak handshake
A weak handshake is like a sorry fellow
A sorry fellow is like a barren heart

Mike Liss
Ronan High School
Ronan

FLAMINGO CYCLE POEM

A flamingo is like a pink carnation
A pink carnation is like a winter sunrise
A winter sunrise is like the moon reflecting on water
The moon reflecting on water is like a glass skyscraper
A glass skyscraper is like a mirror reflecting moonlight
A mirror reflecting moonlight is like a flamingo.

Casey Sanders
Russell Elementary
Great Falls

AN ODE TO LIFE

Life is like an
endless red stream
falling over gray rocks and
oak trees but never quitting.
Life is a cloud over-
head, tumbling around on
blue breezes.
Life is a mountain range,
going everywhere, up and
down and joining to more
and making more.
Life is like a yellow kite
blowing in the breeze.
Life is like the salty
ocean spray, refreshing
you after a walk along
the black beach.
Life, we thirst for
more of you; we
try not to waste you
Because like food we never get
enough of you.

Kevin Goodan
Ronan High School
Ronan

GRACE

Grace is a tall, soft-voiced woman
always seeking perfection. She takes
a grip of your mind like a dream.
She acts like a soft blowing breeze,
but like the rain she knows
what type of person you really are.

Stacie Benton
Lewis and Clark Elementary
Great Falls

Riding my motorbike
The stiff wind stinging my face
the engine vibrates
into my hands
up my arms
and neck
into my mind
and I am one
with its vibration.

Shawn Barnes
Ronan High School
Ronan

REMEMBERING PLACES

Have you ever been to Helena
where the houses are so old
the steps creak? Where the ghosts
of children still laugh and play?
Have you ever been to the sea
where the waves lick the sand
off the beach and seagulls skim
the surface for fish?

Have you ever been to Bismark
where the winter's so cold
your toes froze? Only birds
fly over the rainbow, but I
never will, because I'm too short.
Have you ever been picked on
so much you wanted to cry?
I have, and I hope the people
who tease me know
I am a human being.

Sara Van Nice
West Elementary
Laurel

THE COUNTRY

In the morning people rise out
of their beds. Horses gallop to the fence
waiting for oats.
Cats prowl for an early morning
breakfast of mouse.
The sun turns on its bright bulb.

Jenna Richter
Anna Jefferies Elementary
Cut Bank

NEBRASKA

In the alfalfa
and the corn fields where deer
and kangaroo rats live
I'm walking in Ponca Creek
swimming on a hot day
walking the rolling hills.
And then we're driving
down an endless dirt road,
and at night hunt racoons
shining the spotlight
at their sparkling eyes.

Scott Kinzie
Plains Middle School
Plains

The mountains are like
the body of a giant laid down
for a nap. Still sleeping,
deteriorating, changing color.
But in the valley, the houses
people, cars don't really pay
any attention to the Rockies
as they fall and bleach.

Danelle Roy
E.F. Duvall Jr. High
Deer Lodge

SUMMER SUNSET POEM

A summer sunset is like a gopher's
footprint
A gopher's footprint is like Tchaicovsky's
masterpiece
Tschaicovsky's masterpiece is like a
winter breeze
A winter breeze is like a summer sunset

Mark Sanders
North Jr. High
Great Falls

CLOUDS

As I walk through a field
and look at the sky
I see a very large sponge.
I like it when a bird flies
high as a cloud. It makes me
think of a dream, when clouds
turn black, the white clouds are gone
and the sun hides its face
in fear.

Theresa Wilson
Havre Jr. High
Havre

Running through a meadow
as night slowly falls,
the moon staring at you,
tall grass scratching
your legs. You look back
and run as fast
as you can. You trip
and fall, slowly getting up.
You look at the swaying trees.
You start running again
and feel like never stopping.

Staci Aafedt
Lewis and Clark Elementary
Great Falls

Dry and hot, not
even a drop of water.
A crow flies over. It seems like
the sun will never go down.
Had the crow only landed.

Very slowly me
and my dog keep walking.
Light as it is, the sun
lowers.
Every drop of water would help,
yet there is none.

Jenny May Dolan
Anderson School
Bozeman

RAIN

Rain beats like drums on the roof.
Wind rumbles through the grass
like a stampede of boars,
for in the rainy north, showers pour.

Flowers bloom
and make the gardens like a straight
marching band. The petals grow
like trumpeting horns.

Bryan Vellinga
Plains Middle School
Plains

SEVEN DOORS

Behind door one I saw
people with snakes in their hair
like spaghetti. I ran to door
two with the creep still in my mind

Behind door two were three cows
being milked but not in the usual
way. Milk was coming out of
their nose like a waterfall. I ran
to door three with milk all over
myself.
Behind door three I saw a huge
bowl of spaghetti with meat balls
rolling all over like an avalanche.

Behind door four I saw a golden
gate. I opened it. I saw my dream
house. I looked inside but it wasn't
my dream house because there were
trees in there instead of furniture
I went to the next door disappointed.

Behind door five it cheered me up
with jack-in-the-boxes shooting up but
instead of jack in the box, it was
Michael Jackson. I screamed
like I was being murdered.

Behind door six I saw popcorn
suffocating people so I ran
away very fast.

Behind door seven I saw unicorns
jumping through clouds. I have
always wanted to jump in clouds
so I joined them and stayed
there forever.

Cathy Daday
Russell Elementary
Great Falls

Behind door one
I saw a mirror that had stories inside it.
Behind door two
There were three people playing a dice game
Behind door three
I saw a desert with
one man wandering
Behind door four
I saw a snake ready to strike
but I killed it
Behind door five
was an eight-armed monster who showed me
to door six where
there was a war that
no one won.
Behind door seven
I saw home

Joe Eaton
Grandey School
Terry

7 DOORS

Behind the first door I saw
three Libyan terrorists
planting bombs by my school
I slammed the door
Behind door two I found
President Reagan kissing Bonzo goodnight
Behind door three I saw
50 billion ants ripping through my bedroom
Behind door four I saw
a train coming at me
I slammed the door
Behind this door I found Iranians
dropping an atom bomb on Iran instead of
Iraq
Behind door six I saw
A man on the third hole at the Country Club
diving for his golf ball
Behind door seven I found
the exterminator in my room
with a can of Raid and a shovel

Mark Jensen
Washington Middle School
Miles City

Behind door one
I saw a vampire with
a brass cross
I opened door two to
find a man skimming
over a lake's surface on bare feet
In door three there
was a waiter with a check
I slammed the door
In door four there
was a game
of Dungeons and Dragons
being played
At door five there was
a huge desert with a
pyramid and
the Rolling Stones were on the top
In door six was a library
with signs saying to be noisy
The seventh door was a multi-
colored chute and I jumped
in and landed
in my bed

Miles Palhke
Washington Middle School
Miles City

THE PEREGRINE FALCON

As small as a wood duck, as fast as a train, so lonely in its small world
It is like a small black speck floating in the cool breeze, so small, so lonely
Its head is as sleek as a shiny black car just coming out of the carwash,
His wings are strong as a grizzly bear coming out of hibernation
His talons are rough and strong as sandpaper.
So small, so lonely.

Alex Shanks
Bigfork Elementary
Bigfork

If I were an imaginary thing
I'd shrink and fly
into a girl's imagination,
go on a trip through it. I'd play
a horn in her ear, or ring a bell
in her ear, so she'd hear.

Charity Rick
Blue Sky Elementary
Rudyard

CONDOR

I'm big, I'm strong, I'm fast
I'm big as a dragon
strong as a hurricane
My wings flap
as strong as a typhoon
I'm faster than a thunderbolt
I can see for miles
My claws are sharp as needles
No bird nor animal can
destroy me
Fast as a flash of lightning
I can swallow a bear
in one gulp
My eyes are frightening as
two flashlights in the night.

Paksa Dewhurst
Russell Elementary
Great Falls

A boy sitting on the ground
playing with dirt
playing with a truck
playing with a pup. A bird flies
like the wind on your arm.

Aaron Iverson
Lockwood Elementary
Billings

FRIENDS

Boe Scott, the nuttiest kid
in the world
had stitches every time.
I saw him in the first three years
I knew him.
Those were the days in Laurel.

Bucky Clark
West Elementary
Laurel

TOWN

The streets all look the same
I've seen them one too many times

The town looks abandoned
I don't blame people for leaving

The water is gray
like the clouds in the sky

The town would be warm
if we threw a match in the gas tanks

The cars echo the emptiness of the town

The weeds are old and brown
like the buildings in the town

There's a full moon on the street

The town is solemn
like a funeral

Steve Hickel
Turner High School
Turner

ODE TO A SIDEWALK

A trampled, beaten-down path
is always giving. Its veins are cracks
and its blood is spilled Coke
after Friday movies. The sidewalk
has no life, yet it lives.
Decayed dinosaur, burnt trees, the left-over
meat from that elephant 10,000 years ago
are in there watching you
trample over time
like you're a time machine.

Peter Ostrem
Meadow Lark Elementary
Great Falls

THE PENCIL MAN

On a busy New York Street I sit
  Nobody notices
  Nobody cares
I don't see what all the hustle is about
  I hear them grumbling
  and complaining
About unfair bosses
  low wages
  heavy hours
Yet they hurry to get where they don't want to be
  to put in nine hours
  or more
    here and
      there
I am content to sit and watch
  the rich
  the famous
as they go by
  I am happy when they buy
  a pencil
And when they
  never notice me.

Debbie Shanklin
Belgrade High School
Belgrade

When they paved the streets in Lambert,
we went to watch the paving,
We saw a big steam roller,
trucks that brought in loads of tar,
and trucks that brought in gravel.

We heard the roar of the motors,
the splashes of the water truck,
the crunching of the gravel,
and the yelling of the men.

We smelled the oily, stinky tar
and the smoke from all the trucks.

We felt the water hit us
in the dusty, heavy air.
We felt the earth quiver
and the trucks rumbled by.

And when the job was finished
and the streets were black and smooth,
we got out bikes and skateboards
and hotwheels and wagons
and made them all zoom!

Collaborative Poem
Third and Fourth Grade
Lambert Elementary
Lambert

He doesn't use a pillow, uses
white teeth powder, then leaves smelling
like brand new shoes.
Sitting on my special desk, my feet
over the edge, catching the still air,
his sunny rock keeps me company.
Then he smiles at me, and I light up.
The trains rumble by, but he's
not on them. At night, at the car
wash, he'd let me
measure the soap. I'd get shivers
down my back when he'd spray me,
cleaning off the cement.

Mary Schaller
Blue Sky High School
Rudyard

I wish I had
A motorcycle
As silver as a knight's sword
With wheels as black as night
And power strong enough to
Go through a steel wall
If I had a
motorcyle
I'd ride it everywhere
Day it would shine in the sun
Night it would go as fast
as a jaguar.

Eric Dearing
Granville Stuart Elementary
Deer Lodge

MAIN STREET

Main Street in Glendive is sort of small,
but in the evenings, it's like a race track
where people are dragging up and down,
while some of the smarter ones sit on the side and watch.
Main Street is the place to be
in a town where there's nothing but
Main Street.

Ervin Suko
Dawson County High School
Glendive

LAMBERT

An old grain truck enters town.
Children ride their bikes on the worn streets.
The school sits and waits for the sound of feet again.
The flag is lifted. Noise fills the cold fall air.
The grain truck leaves town faster than it came.

Gene Irigoin
Lambert High School
Lambert

Today we are
running
away from the world. They are
calling
your name, but there is no answer.

Tracy Morse
Havre Jr. High
Havre

HAYS

Off of 66 it sits
foreign to travelers who want to go
anyplace but here.
The people are friendly
only to those they like.
They wait at the Post Office
at the first of the month
to get their welfare.
Most of them buy beer
but some buy food.
When it all runs out,
they borrow
and resume their escapades
'til the first of the month
when they start all over again.
In the summer they congregate,
but not in the church—
mostly at the canyon or in the bars.
Someone gets stabbed
at least once a month
but no one knows why.

Everall Fox
Hays-Lodgepole High School

HOME

I was sitting in my house one day.
It was quiet and still.
No one was there but me.
I could feel the breeze within me
as I sat there all alone.

Eric Myers
W.K. Dwyer Intermediate
Anaconda

On the third floor balcony
I can see
shadows falling from the trees
rooftops and chimneys
and a little bird
in a pine tree.

It is peaceful here
away from traffic and noise.
Here I think and dream
of my ambitions.

I wish the whole world could be
as silent and peaceful
as I am here
on the third floor balcony.

Deirdre Holland
St. Mary's Jr. High
Livingston

HEALING

There's darkness
beat of a drum
sound of a song
to call in the Grandfather.
People praying to bring him quicker
bells ringing
rattles shaking
He's here
in this very room.
Old man, speaking his tongue, speaks.
Medicine man's voice talking
in his tongue to Grandfather.
"Help us, Great One.
We need help.
We need healing.
We need answers to questions."

Rhonda Birdtail
Hays-Lodgepole High School

MY MOM

Her mouth is like a speeding 30-06
Her body is like ten brick walls
When she tells you to do something
it's like you're in Army boot camp
But sometimes she's nice as a newborn kitten
She may yell and fuss at me
But it's for my own good
She's a good mom to have when
You need help. She's always there
for me. She struggles hard for
Me and I get in trouble but we
understand each other
like eagles understand the air.

Shawn Reagans
North Jr. High
Great Falls

WHEN I WAS A KID

I see it flowing in the smooth
but chilly wind.
I look up, up
until I see it again,
up the sleek and cold-hearted pole.
There it is at the top, softly blowing,
now whipping fiercely
snapping in all directions,
while we sing to it our loyalty
and pledge our allegiance
through chittering smiles
as we try to hide our cold.

Mary Donohue
C.M. Russell High School
Great Falls

THE HOUSE

I got up in the morning
and walked to the old brick
house at the end of the block.
I walked up the stairs, opened
the door and *poof,* I woke up
in bed with my dream over, but there
was still that house to face.

Sean Duncan
Lewis and Clark Elementary
Great Falls

PRAYING FOR MORE

Twining grimy fingers
I stare down at them
and find I am praying and screaming
for more than old, dying blankets.
The family I hear
begging behind me is mine,
and we need more
than cotton and love.

Charlotte Werk
Hays-Lodgepole High School

STORMS

I see the clouds coming quick,
the pounding bomb of thunder,
lightning coming to burn
    the earth.
It gives the sky a glittering
shade. Then the clouds
punish the ground with balls
    of fire that eat up
    our crops.
I stand to see the ruin of our place
    as the clouds go marching away.

Sarah Anderson
Granville Stuart Elementary
Deer Lodge

The wet mud stuck to my feet
and the drizzling rain
made me curse and yell.
My feet were helplessly stuck.
I felt as if I were enclosed
in an envelope and someone
was slowly sealing it.

David Arnold
Lockwood Elementary
Billings

BEFORE OUR SWIM

Walking this humid asphalt
July ringing in my ears,
Mick Andis rolling his towel
and his brother Rick
looking for gold in his shoes.

That was the day
those cicadas sawed us to bits
picking crabapples: they swarmed.
Their furry legs
stuck between our teeth.
I didn't touch the ground.

Trembling in the garage,
chased by a grizzly, kodiak or lion.
This one had a sticky tongue
and glassy wings—buzzing.

David Johnson, teacher
Wibaux High School
Wibaux

The misty air filled our nostrils
the foggy atmosphere blurred our view of the water.
"What could lie beyond in the shadowy depths?"
We rolled up our pantlegs
and ventured into the cold, murky waters,
searching for butterclams
with our toes.

Kathi Meidinger
Terry High School
Terry

ODE TO THE WILDERNESS

Because you can see the
green melted-over pine trees
and hills surrounding the lake.
Because the blue water
looks like a smooth
glass mirror bending
the rays of the sun.
Because all the animals
come to drink there when they're
sweating hot in the sun.
Because of the peacefulness
and the quietness with nothing
in the road.

Steve O'Neill
Grandey School
Terry

DARKNESS

Darkness creeps ever so slowly
over the hill. It never makes a sound,
afraid that someone would wake.
If you wait, you could see him steal
the light away from the earth.

Bob Havens
Granville Stuart Elementary
Deer Lodge

START OF A STORM

The trees
go wild
yellow slaps
the sky
awnings leap
papers fly
and suddenly
with a rattling cry
against the pane
the rain roars.

Sabrina Williams
Lockwood Elementary
Billings

The doves fly
timid and
lingering

ambling river
raising itself
up

the deer tracking
antsily on
the bank

The river accepts
the gift but gives it
up on the other side.

Peter Jennings
C.M. Russell High School
Great Falls

THE NAMING

Facing east, facing west, south, and north.
I've been waiting for this day since my birth.
"Ni-hy-ak," Ton-ats-o-wa calls out.
"We offer you this girl
to follow you and your ways forever."
He says to me, "Ni-hy-ak,
never forget the old ways,
always remember your heritage, Yellow Hair."

Darian Doney
Hays-Lodgepole High School

WILLIAM OTTO

I remember Grandpa,
how he used to fill his pipe with tobacco
then slowly pack it down with his thumb.
He would sit back, cross his legs,
and light that old corn-cob pipe.

He used to walk really slow,
with his hands in the pockets
of his blue and white striped overalls.
He always seemed to look down when he walked,
like a friend had just died
or like he was looking
for something he had lost.

Lea Schock
Dawson County High School
Glendive

GRANDPA

I will never be able to put it all down
how I felt about him. He used to take me out
to gather the eggs and milk the cow on summer days.
He let me swing from a rope in the loft
until my hay fever made me quit.
When Grandma made tapioca pudding
Grandpa would let me pick out the fish eyes
with my fingers. He let me
shave off his whiskers with his Remington,
and he told the best stories at suppertime.
I will never forget how he looked
under the white hospital sheets.

Lynn Donaldson
Denton Jr. High
Denton

FICTION

Across the state, student fiction took many forms, from the first-person anecdote to the novella. Genre fiction was popular, and students produced fantasy stories of dragons, knights, and magic grandmas; science fiction works featuring space flights and inter-stellar conflicts; historical fiction highlighting Old West explorers and Indian maidens; outdoor stories of sled dogs and elk hunts; mystery stories featuring juvenile crime fighters; and contemporary fiction of the Judy Blume/Beverly Cleary variety.

Emphasis was given to the elements of fiction: characters, conflict, setting, and plot, and students worked to produce realistic dialogue as well as convincing action. In several classes, the follow-through efforts were most impressive, as students learned first hand that rough drafts and much hard work go into any quality work of fiction. The examples below, gleaned from elementary and junior high classes across the state, should serve to indicate the quality and variety of the fiction produced over the past year.

ELEMENTARY AND JUNIOR HIGH

FANTASY

Dawn broke suddenly over the isolated patch of green timber. The sun rarely penetrated the dense foliage, but what few rays did enter reflected through the dew in all the colors of the rainbow. The beauty of the place was so great that even the animals often failed to notice the tiny pond which sat in a corner. Yet this pond, this tiny pond, had seen ages pass which would shame any human. And in the pond's long memory, no one thing had ever appreciated it more than the child.

He had come one morning crashing through the brush, silencing every bird in the field. When the child entered the field, he made straight for the pond, sat down on the bank, and proceeded to take off his boots, planning to dip his feet in the pond. The child couldn't help but look in wonder at the seclusion and obvious secrecy of the place. In the same way, the pond looked at the boy with amazement. If possible, the child's bright red hair and blue eyes outshone the dew.

From "Stone of the Ages"
Allen Jones
St. Mary's School
Livingston

"Can anything be done to restore the spell?" asked Aulden.

"Yes. Someone will have to jouney to the Forbidden Caves and draw some water from the Fountain of Youth to restore the wizard to his proper age."

"I shall go, Father. I will ride at noon!"

"Wait, Son. There is something else you should know about this quest. Dark Dwarves have already broken through the barrier."

From "The Wizard, the Sword, and the Vial"
Jason Volk
St. Mary's School
Livingston

There is a mountain far east named Three Skull Mountain. The Third Head and Left Eye has a glove that is magic. Only a brave and honest man can have the glove. If he is evil, he will become a walking skeleton for five summers.

From "One Hand"
Brad Olson
Big Timber Elementary
Big Timber

"Let's go," Grandma said, pointing her finger. All of a sudden there appeared a moped! "Oh, dear," she moaned. "I was trying to keep this a secret."

"But what..." I began.

"Come on," she interrupted, hopping on the moped and handing me a helmet. "I guess I'll have to explain everything on the way there. Hang on!" she yelled over the loud roar of the motor.

From "The Magical Grandmother"
Theresa Pfaff
Graff Elementary
Laurel

Castle Hindell was a beautiful place. There were huge, marble fountains and tall towers that seemed to touch the sky. Dar had noticed that in the twilight, from a certain tower, it looked as if the beautiful red sun seemed to touch the Earth. As Dar looked out over the landscape, he heard a voice. It was a page from the king. He cried, "The king wishes to see you right away!"

From "The Dragon Story"
Nick Tkach
Monforton School
Bozeman

"Follow me to my room," the man said, walking up the stairs. He opened a door, walked in, and sat down. A.J. looked around and saw a shield, a sword, a hammer, and what looked like a bow without a string.

"The bow is yours. You just pull, and magic arrows shoot from it," the old man said. "You are brave, so will you kill a dragon that killed my people?"

From "The Deadly Dragon"
A.J. Mapston
Denton Elementary
Denton

One day Grandma Maddy was wearing her jeans and a flowered shirt. She was sitting in her chair in the family room reading a book called "All about Magic." When she felt her left ear start to twitch, she suddenly sensed that someone was in trouble. She stopped reading, and then she saw in her mind a picture of someone hanging from Hudson Mercury Cliff. "This is a job for Grandma Maddy," she said to her calico cat. And she quickly ran out to her backyard where she kept her beautiful white unicorn, Trigger.

From "Grandma Maddy"
Wendy Tetschner
Graff Elementary
Laurel

SCIENCE FICTION

Out of nowhere I was suddenly confronted by another army of aliens flying on artificial wings. A couple of them peeled away from the main group and sped my way. They zigzagged through space, dropping their deadly bombs at me, but I was just too quick. I guided my spaceship through the hail of bombs, returning blasts when I could. But for everyone I killed, there were two more. I dodged, I fired, I loved it—the exhilarating feeling of zooming through space, defending the cosmos from evil aliens, mixing their atoms with those of the galaxy. But alas, I got too careless. While I was enjoying the battle, a ship came at me in one last desperate attempt. One of the bombs caught my wing and sent me spinning to my death!

Confounded video games! I'll never play Galaxian again for as long as I live! That was my last ship. I stare at the screen. I begin to picture myself flying through space killing aliens left and right. I can't stand it. I drop another quarter in the slot and start to play.

"Aliens"
Jeff Dillon
Denton Jr. High
Denton

HISTORICAL FICTION

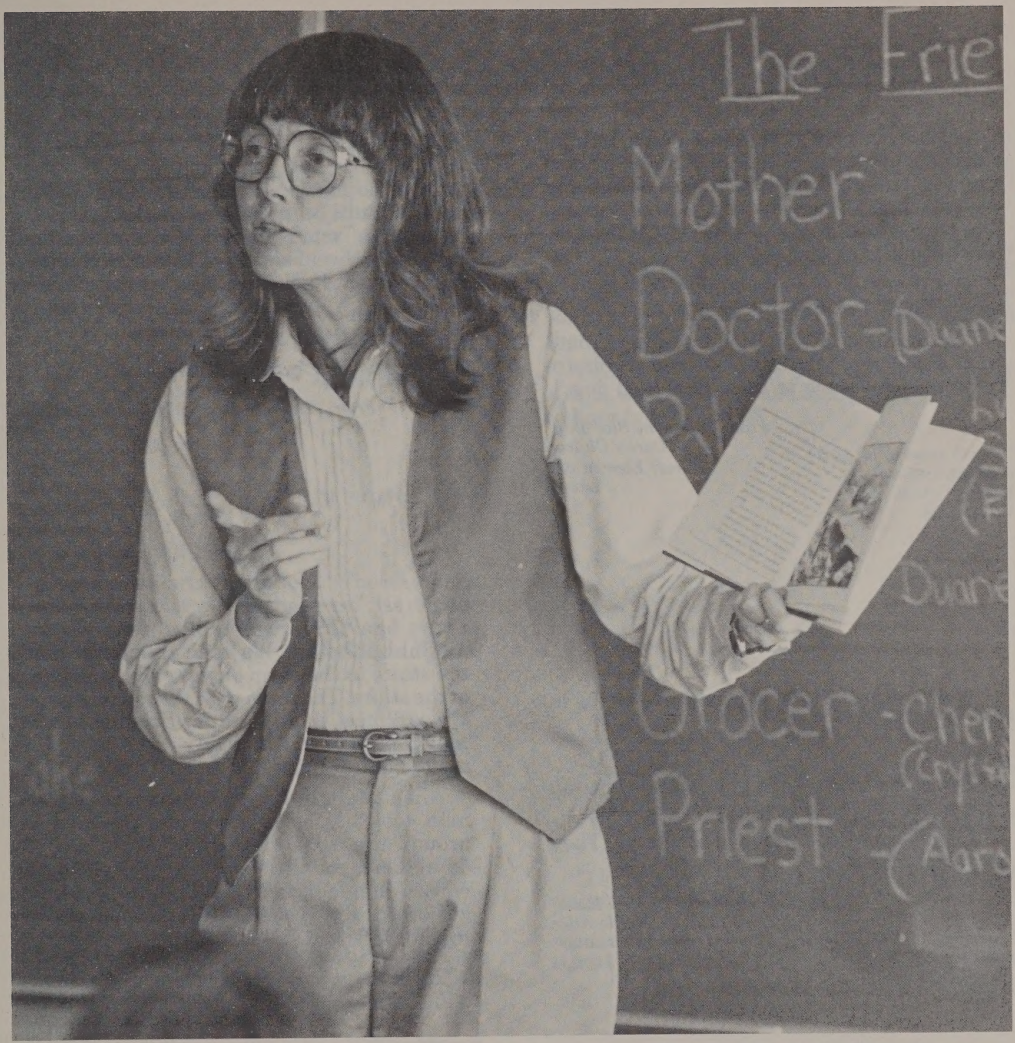
"You will become Tiger Lily!" the chief called after her. His shout seemed to echo forever in her mind, and it sent a sharp pain that pierced her heart.

That night as Felicia lay beneath the stars, her mind was racing with questions she could not answer. "Why me? What have I done to deserve this nightmare?" Then her mind seemed to go blank as she drifted off to sleep.

From "Becoming Her"
Kristin Pedersen
Monforton School
Bozeman

We rode for about a hundred miles before we came upon a village of Crow Indians. The village smelled of dried meat, berries, and many other mouth-watering smells. Rusty and I had been hunting but had had no luck, so we stopped and asked for food. They made us a deal. They would give us food and tell us where their secret hunting and trapping places were if we would help them fight the Sioux! After a lot of thinking we agreed and were served the best meal we had ever had.

From "Battle"
Jeremy Lake
Lambert Elementary
Lambert



Linda Peavy

Courtesy of *Livingston Enterprise*

OUTDOOR STORIES

As Buck was ready to sneak away, human voices caught his attention. Buck walked back, and another stranger looked at him and stared, mouth opened. "Why, Mr. Stumps! What a beautiful dog. I'll pay $550 for that fine animal," he exclaimed.

"But Buck is a puppy and Shaggs is a grown dog," Mr. Stumps said.

"Mr. Stumps, I'll pay $460 for Shaggs, but I want Buck, too," the stranger said stubbornly. "Buck can learn to be a great sled dog."

From "Buck the Sled Dog"
Darby Chilson
Graff Elementary
Laurel

"We're almost there. Do you have shells in your gun, Ron?"

"Yes."

"Try to be quiet. Let's get behind that big rock so we can lean against it to shoot."

"Look!" said Ron, "Look at all the elk! They are everywhere!"

From "The Elk Hunt"
Kayle Allen
Denton Elementary
Denton

MYSTERY

I was so mad I slammed the door and ran and ran until I came upon a bag lady. She was wearing a scarf around her hair and old ragged clothes. I sat down by her. "Hi, what's your name," I asked in a soft voice.

"My name is Ivy," she said in a grumpy voice. "What's on your mind?"

"Oh, just my brother, the pain."

From "The Bag Lady, My Brother, and Me"
Tracy Dillon
Denton Elementary
Denton

"Shhh, Maggie. We can't talk here. Go up the stairs to the room on your right at the top of the stairs. The room with the red wallpaper. We will meet there. And for goodness sakes, Maggie, don't get into any more trouble or make a lot of noise," warned Tory.

When Maggie got to the room, the same man took her by surprise and grabbed her around the neck. He asked, "What are you doing here, you little brat? Answer me!" And when Maggie didn't answer him pronto, he got angry and yelled, "If you don't answer me, I'll kill you!

From "The Making of a Heroine"
Erin Schladweiler
Monforton School
Bozeman

We figured we had better adjust our sights, so we went and got a can and propped up our gun barrels on it. After sighting in, we fired. My sight was shooting to the left, and Jeremy's to the right. After making the adjustment, we tried to shoot a bird sitting on top of the car. We aimed, fired, but the BB hit the car window. It shattered.

From "BB's and Trouble"
Rusty Vaira
Lambert Elementary
Lambert

That night in the middle of supper, Mom said, "I smell smoke."

"Me, too! said Pete.

Dad looked out the window. "The hay stack is on fire! Next it will be the barn!" He dashed out the door, calling, "Bill, run and get the hose. Pete, run and get the buckets by the shed."

From "Fire!"
Larry Scheid
Terry Elementary
Terry

"It's a race!" Jeanette said. Then she hung up the phone, ran up to the barn, and called in Misty. She put her hand around the bit to warm it up and then put it in Misti's mouth. Then she put the saddle blanket on and finally the saddle. She led her out of the barn, hopped on, and cried, "Let's go, Misti! Let's win that race!"

From "Misti"
Kristi Prevost
Three Buttes School
Lambert

Julie was so excited she ran up the stairs. Dreams filled her head as she looked out her window and watched the sun beat upon the barn. She softly whispered to herself, "It can't be true."

BEEP! BEEP! went the horn on her dad's truck. Julie rushed outside to greet him. "Dad, where is the horse?"

From "A Special Friend"
Denise Ansotegui
St. Mary's School
Livingston

"Come on! Let's hurry!" said Maggie. "This valentine has to be ready!"

"Yeah, hah! I can just see her crying right now! said Minnie.

"You guys, I don't really want to do this," said Lucy.

"Oh, come on, Lucy! Are you a baby or something," asked Minnie.

From "A True Valentine"
Leta Eaton
Terry Elementary
Terry

There's no worse time to get scared than when you're tired. Usually I might have nightmares about Satan, having him at the end of my bed or being chased by him in a mansion with an endless number of rooms.

One Friday night, I had just watched the premier of Michael Jackson's video called "Thriller." It was midnight, and I was stiff as a dead cow, but there's no better way to get rid of fear than to sleep like a log. I crawled in bed and was half asleep when BANG! I looked at my closet, and my football helmet rolled out of it.

"Ma!"

No answer.

"What was that?" I yelled.

All of a sudden, my curtain swayed back and forth. I just hid there, listening to my heart clanging. CLANG!!! My clock fell off the shelf.

"Ma!"

"What, dear?"

"C-c-c-ome here!!"

She came in and looked at the window. "Aughh!! she screamed and ran out of the room. I immediately followed.

Outside the door of my room, I tripped over a big figure which was my dad. He roared with laughter as Ma turned on the light. Dad had three strings on his hand. One for the helmet, one for the curtain, and one for the clock.

"Satan"
J.R. Ross
Big Timber Elementary
Big Timber

I couldn't believe that I actually saw two albino pheasants. It amazed me and my mom and dad. My dad said he was going to take our camera and take a picture of them, but he hasn't yet. If he doesn't, I will... because it is far from the ordinary.

From "A True Story About the Pheasants Who Got Away 'Cause It Was the Wrong Hunting Season"
Loren Cantrell
Big Timber Elementary
Big Timber

One night I was upstairs. All of a sudden, I heard this rumbling and crumbling. I guess the rest of the family must have heard the sound too. We all looked outside. Thanks to the moonlight, we could see a great big bulldozer on top of the Crazy Mountains. We were so mad we drove out to the Crazy Mountains. There was a great big crowd out there. We all started screaming at the person driving the bulldozer. All of a sudden, I woke up and I looked outside and they were still there. Thank heavens!

"Crazy Mountains"
Katie Bowden
Big Timber Elementary
Big Timber

I got the ring back, but then I started to think if it was gonna cause this much trouble I'd have to do away with it. So I did! I took the ring and said I was going on a walk. I saw a deer! It was beautiful. I gave the ring to the deer and never saw it again!

From "The Diamond Ring"
Stephanie Kunda
Big Timber Elementary
Big Timber

I was playing Joust at the Grand, and Burly Bob came in and unplugged the machine. Then Bob ran away. I wouldn't dare sock him, because he is the toughest and meanest kid on the block. I'll tell you how tough he is. He eats shredded wheat without milk.

From "The Fight"
Erik Simmons
Big Timber Elementary
Big Timber

IN THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER: SENIOR HIGH FICTION

Studies in point of view produced interesting bits of stories from seniors at Dawson County High in Glendive. In one instance, students were asked to begin a story in which someone is riding a bike and waves to someone else. When those story beginnings were turned in, the students were told to consider the story from another point of view—that of the person to whom the biker waved. They were then to write another story beginning, this time from the observer's viewpoint. The paired beginnings below show some of the imaginative responses to this assignment.

"THE AGENT"
By Mike Krueger

"Remember to wave with your left hand, then to raise your cap with your right," Bill Atkinson said to himself. If the signal was repeated by the person across the road, Bill would drop the film cannister on the lawn.

Bill waved with his left hand, the person across the road waved with his left. As Bill started to lift his cap, the person pulled out a revolver and opened fire. Bill quickly turned his bike down a pathway through Municipal Park. His counterpart was picked up by an awaiting car. "I've gotta ditch this bike!" Bill thought.

Heading for the swimming pool, Bill caught a bullet in his right shoulder as his pursuers left the scene. "It just ain't my day," muttered Bill. Such was the life of a CIA agent.

* * * *

As the warm summer breeze blew through the elm trees, Viktor Kemegys strode down Assembly Drive, looking for a man riding a bicycle. If the man waved with his left hand and took off his cap with his right, Viktor knew he had the right guy.

The biker did just as expected, and Viktor pulled out his revolver and opened fire on him. The American ducked down a pathway through the park. Viktor called to his comrade, Vladymir, who raced a four-door Chrysler around the nearest corner.

"Which way did the capitalist pig go?" snapped Vladymir.

"Through the park. Go down this street, and I'll try to give him a scare," answered Viktor.

The American agent raced down the path, headed toward the swimming pool, but Viktor's bullet caught him in the right shoulder. He tumbled off the bike and landed at the base of an elm tree.

"Next time he will not be so foolish," sneered Vladymir.

"Yes. Let's go back to the Consul, Comrade," replied Viktor, and the Chrysler sped away in the fading light.

"HEARING"
by Randy Russell

These dratted hot days! God really knows how to get to people. Sort of a threat of hell, I guess. Darn shirt! Government just go out of their way to make them hot. I'm soaked. I've got to lose some weight, I guess. Why'd God make food taste so good? I'm bushed. Got to cart around these heavy catalogues. Every other house gets three bills, one letter, and a catalogue! What I'd do for a beer!

Would you look at this! Little Tom Green. He's deaf, but just look at him riding that bicycle! He's got guts!

"Hi, Tom!" Oh, my God! Johnson doesn't see him coming! "Tom, Tom! Watch out! Oh, my God! Oh, my God! Help! Someone call an ambulance!"

Oh, it was a beautiful day. The sun was shining so bright it almost blinded you. I was going down to Dry Creek—that's where we catch minnows and turtles. Billy was already down there, and I was in a hurry. I hopped on my bicycle and took off as fast as I could.

It was early in the morning, and the mailman was just coming around the corner at the end of my block. I waved at him, and he waved back. I thought he was waving, anyway. He was shouting, I guess, but I couldn't hear him, I just stared right at him. Then everything went. Mr. Johnson just smashed into me. I remember lying there, everybody was talking, but it was silent, I felt my body pull away.

Now, here I am, watching all the children play. It's great up here. I can hear sounds for the first time in my life. Well maybe it's not life, but I can hear.

"GOING OUT"
by Tonja Arpin

Toby had been the first one out of the door when the bell rang. He was on his bike and peddling fast before most kids had even left the school. Today wasn't anything special, that's just the way Toby was. It wasn't that he didn't like school. It was just that there were places he'd rather be.

He was off to the dam. He wanted to get there before the best fishing spots were taken. He was just on the edge of town when he saw Johnny. Toby gave Johnny a wave as he passed by. Toby almost always saw Johnny on his way to the dam, and although he always waved, he never really paid much attention to the old man. Johnny Cloake was someone Toby's mom described as "not quite there."

Johnny Clocke slowly shuffled his way down the bumpy dirt road. His wooden leg made the trip that took most people only minutes seem endless at times. He had walked this dirt road every day for as long as he could remember. In the winter, as he shuffled along in his torn overcoat, the wind howled a song into his ears. In the summer. the sweat that ran down his back and forehead mixed with the dust that blew from the gravel road to make his clothes and skin dirtier than they already were.

Johnny looked down the road and saw the first of many boys who would pedal their bikes to the dam today. The boy waved as he pedaled by, but Johnny barely noticed. When the weather turned warm, boys always went to the dam.

"MENDING"
by Terri Carney

Martha was huffing and puffing as she finally came over the top of the hill. This was the first time in years she had ridden all the way up and over without stopping. From here on out, it was an easy ride, so Martha relaxed and began to think about her friend Mildred who had died only three weeks earlier. Martha didn't like to think about it, but she couldn't help realizing that she, too, was getting old and that although she had had a good life, there were still things she wanted to do.

As she looked down the street and saw Gladys Johnson, it occured to her that there was one thing she needed to do, but she'd never been able to bring herself to do it. She and Gladys had been enemies for years, and she had just learned that Gladys was dying of cancer and had only a short time to live. Martha had been wanting to say she was sorry for all those years of quarreling, but her pride and maybe a little bit of cowardice got in the way. There Gladys was now—outside and accessible. Martha wanted to stop and talk with her, but she could not make her legs do as she wanted. Looking up, she did manage a timid wave as she hurried on her way.

Leaving the house quietly, Gladys set out for a cool morning walk. Turning up the block, tears came to her eyes. She had hoped the doctors were wrong, but test after test proved that she was nearing the end. Death was something Gladys had never thought too much about. The hardest thing to accept was leaving her family and those she loved. That scared Gladys, but she couldn't change her future, so she'd decided to make the best of what she had now.

There, up ahead, she spotted Martha, a long-time enemy because of a stupid quarrel years ago. Gladys felt a sudden urge to run up to Martha and humble herself. How she wished she could tell Martha that all this was childish and foolish. "Why waste what time I have left being angry with someone," she thought to herself. Then, to Glady's surprise, Martha waved. Gladys wanted to reach out and touch her, but she only smiled as her heart agreed with her head that nothing needed to be said. She understood Martha's feelings now because she had finally faced her own.

PACKING IT IN: SENIOR HIGH FICTION

"The Big Chill," a movie popular this school year, opened with a scene in which several people were unpacking their suitcases. Nothing but their hands and the materials they were unpacking could be seen, and only the movie's theme song gave sound to the scene. Yet in that short space of time, moviegoers understood much about several of the film's main characters.

Fiction writers set scenes in a similar manner, and seniors at Glendive's Dawson County High were challenged to write a scene in which a person, any person, is packing to go somewhere, anywhere. The writer of a story or novel has an advantage over the film writer—he or she can go into the thoughts of a person involved in an activity such as packing, and students were invited to take the reader into the thoughts of the packer. When this assignment was completed, the students were told to take the story a bit further by introducing a second character whose presence, actions, or comments either increase the internal conflict of the packer or lead to external conflict of some kind.

"HERO"
by Mike Zimmer

The suitcase lay empty on the hotel room bed. Then the man began to pack his belongings. First came underwear, then socks, mostly white athletic socks. After the socks came pants—three pairs of Levis. Then came shirts, mostly polo shirts, with a few Adidas and Nike T-Shirts as well. In his small handbag the man began packing his overnight things. First a blow dryer, then two or three combs, cologne, deodorant stick, razor, after shave.

A knock came at the door and a voice yelled, "Come on, Rich, let's go! The bus is loading for the stadium."

Rich picked up his bags and started for the door. But then he stopped, frozen in his tracks.

"Who was that?" he thought. The voice didn't belong to any of his teammates, though it seemed almost familiar. No. It wasn't a voice that belonged here, now that he thought about it. Then it hit him. Those death threats he'd been getting weren't flukes. The killer was waiting for him out there right now!

Rich dropped his bags and grabbed the phone. "Hotel Security?" he whispered as low as possible. "This is Rich Melton, Room 216. I think there's a man outside my door trying to kill me. What? Yes, THE Rich Melton of the Tuscon Toros. Are you crazy? How can you think of autographed pictures at a time like this? Get some men up here and get this nut!"

He hung the phone up and waited. Three minutes went by, but it seemed like an hour. Suddenly a skirmish was heard out in the hall. A knock came at the door.

"OK, Mr. Melton. We've got him. Take a look at him before we book him."

"Rich, I know you stars value your privacy, but isn't this going a bit too far," said the suspect.

"Dad!" blurted Rich. "I thought you weren't going to come! Oh, Dad, I'm so sorry. Let him go, guys." Rich and his father laughed and started to enter his room.

"Does this mean I get that autographed photo?" asked the desk clerk.

"JOURNEY"
by Tim Nunberg

I hesitated when I picked up the empty suitcase, because I knew it would never be filled again. I opened up the suitcase to find nothing but emptiness. It made me break into a cold sweat. I could feel it all deep inside me, my stomach churning, churning to no end.

My mind went totally blank when I thought what to put in my death casket. I started walking toward my dresser, but it was like something other than myself was compelling me to walk. My tired legs felt numb.

My clothes felt cold, like they hadn't been worn in years. No color showed on the patterns on the clothes, just black and white. I didn't care anymore. I knew once I got there that I would never be happy again.

I went to the bathroom to the medicine cabinet and stared straight into the mirror. I could see nothing except an old woman I didn't know anymore. I opened the cabinet and took out my pills. I walked into the other room where my suitcase was and just dropped the pill bottles in the dark, endless pit which was about to consume me.

As I closed the suitcase, the snap of the lid set up a constant echo of locks locking shut, never to let life out again. I stood there lifeless for a few seconds until I heard the horn of the taxi that was to take me away to my doom, the nursing home. I stood without moving until I heard a knock at my door, the door of the house that held all the calmness and tranquility, the door of the place I never wanted to leave. Scared, I slowly opened the door to find this man, a man with a smile. There was no end to his smile, no end at all.

He was old in the same sense that I was. "Boy, you're not what I was expecting," he said to me.

I asked, "Why?"

"I don't know why," he said. "I was just expecting something different...

"FISHING"
by Don Burris

Blake turned the rod over and over, carefully inspecting it for cracks. He tried to wiggle each eye to be sure they were all tight, then slipped the rod into its case. Then he checked another in the same way, making sure it, too, was in top-notch condition. Then he picked up a reel, an open-faced Zebco, and carefully took the spool off and oiled the gears, putting a drop on each one. Then turning the handle backwards, he removed it. Slowly turning the screwdriver, he took out each screw holding on the side plate and inspected the gears. He pressured each gear with thumb and finger to be sure they weren't too loose and inspected each tooth for wear. Then he carefully put the side plate back on, screwing it in place, and then slid the spool on the shaft and put on the drag nut. He repeated these actions with a second reel, a Daiwa open-faced. Then he wrapped each in cotton cloth, being careful to cover the reels completely to keep out dust and placing each in a separate box, then tucking them in beside the two rods in the back of the station wagon.

"RUNNING AWAY"
by Eugene Svenson

Robby was mad. In fact, Robby was so mad he was going to run away. He headed down the stairs on his short little legs and rummaged through the dark and dusky confines of the basement. After a few fruitless minutes of looking, he found a large trunk. Robby thought to himself, "This ought to hold most of the things I want to take along."

It was almost impossible to get the trunk up the stairs, and after what seemed to be an endless period of fruitless laboring, Robby sat down on the floor and sobbed a little as he considered the prospect of forgetting the whole idea of running away.

But then he got to thinking again about what had happened, and he began to just boil with rage and frustration, which, of course, gave him renewed strength and energy with which to tackle his project anew. With this bitter determination Robby accomplished the task of getting the trunk up the stairs and into his room.

Now it was time to pack. Robby thought that he would be able to get most of his belongings into the trunk. But he later found that if he put his bicycle in, he could not get much else in. So he made the decision to leave his bicycle at home.

As Robby was deciding about the bike, his mother came into the room to put some clean clothes in his closet. "What are you doing, Robby?" she asked.

Robby was a little reluctant to answer, but finally said, "I'm running away from home, and don't try to stop me."

"Oh, I won't," his mother said while smiling a little. "But why are you running away?"

"Because," Robby spurted out.

"I see. That's a good reason," she said nonchalantly, then added, "Take good care of yourself. And if you decide to come back, you can have your old room—unless your sister wants it." With that, she left the room and a very confused Robby.

DIALOGUE

He sits there thinking of the past.
The look on his face tells you they were happy times.
He looks at me with a smile and says,
"The old days were fun. We didn't worry
about anything back then."
I sit back and direct my attention to his story.
The story he tells I have heard many times.
I like this story as much as the first time I heard it.
He starts by saying, "I remember this one time
me and a few buddies were drunk for weeks."
We stay awake for hours,
him speaking, me listening.
We laugh at his hell-raising days.
Finally, he says, "You are tired. Get your rest."
Together we get up and walk to our rooms.
We are both happy,
He for telling his past, me for hearing it.

Spencer Snow
Hays-Lodgepole High School

TANA

Tana, what happened to your love?
I remember when you protected me
from the hazards of life.
Once I remember that you beat up
the boys on our block who beat up me.
Now that we are both grown up,
there is so much hatred between us.
What happened?
I loved you very much.
I don't know if I will ever learn
to love and trust you once again,
but I'll always wish I could.

Floyd Chapman
Project for Alternative Learning
Helena

VISITING HOUR

It was visiting hour.
As I walked in, I stopped
and signed the register.
I went through another door.
I saw her lying in the box
with flowers all over.
It was hard to take.
I could hear myself sobbing.
I stood there staring at her.
I turned and walked to the door.
When I got there, I stopped.
I turned and looked at her.
Then, in a light whisper, I said,
"Goodbye, Grandma, goodbye."

Corena Benjamin
Monforton School
Bozeman

PAPA'S FAMILY

My life is a comic book.
My sister looks at me, hits me
and continues eating.
When my cousin is running
in the house, my grandfather stops him
and says, "Think," whatever that means.

Kirk Enstrom
Lockwood Elementary
Billings

SWEAT LODGE

When the sun reached
the peak of his climb
the older men stripped down.
I grabbed a towel
and said a prayer.
"Be strong," Grandpa said.
"I will, " I promised with a nod of my head.
When I was in there, I bowed my head
and told the Big Guy "Hi."
As my pores opened, I started to feel
every wrongdoing I ever did.
"Help me, Big Guy," I said.
"Don't let me shrivel up
and melt away."
I prayed and I prayed.
I thought I was going to die.
"Come back some other day,"
the Big Guy said.
"For you got more sins to commit
and a couple more rounds to suffer.
Go away now, go away."

Joseph Black Crow
Hays-Lodgepole High School

THE LAST TO BE

The night is cold, the night is dark
A sound I have not heard
The night is cold, the night is dark
I have not spoken a word

My legs grow tired, My gut hollow
I do not care to eat
My legs grow tired, My gut hollow
I sit to rest my feet

Alone I lie in the quiet woods
No one along my side
Alone I lie in the quiet woods
It seems my friends have died

I am you see the last to be
What are my thoughts now worth
I am you see the last to be
On board this ship called Earth

Sydney Carranco
Washington Middle School
Miles City

A DIAMOND

I wish I was a diamond
glittering in the sun
as bright as a star
I would have so much fun
on a rich person's finger
All my corners would be sharp
as a shark's tooth
I would be as gorgeous
as a white rose sitting in the dark.

Amber Petersen
North Jr. High
Great Falls

I can see myself as I run
down a never-ending road.
The weeds surround me
as if I'm the queen
fighting to get a better look.
My carriage doesn't exist
and my horse is one fat dog.
I also know that I'm alone.
I keep up my pace,
my ligaments beg
for a rest.
But I'm deaf and dumb
and keep on.

Nancy Greytak
Blue Sky High School
Rudyard

I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN

I should have known it woudn't last
when you tried to run my life.
Nobody ever will.
I should have known,
but I didn't.
I walked in, trusting you
and expecting love and trust in return,
but instead I got the anger and hurt
from a you I'd never seen before.
I should have known
when you had reached your limits,
but I didn't. So I felt your anger—
—the punches
—the kicks
—the names
—the screams.
It was a kind of violence that
I would never have expected from you.
I should have known.
Now I know.

Billei Jo Nettleton
Project for Alternative Learning
Helena

From the window to the schoolyard below
I saw, through the volumes piled high round about,
the other kids at play, wild and free.
There were differences between them and me,
differences in friends—
theirs weren't held up by book ends.
differences in values—
though then I didn't know
that school was more important
than some new TV show.
And if ever I felt lonely,
that memory didn't last.

Craig Anderson
Terry High School
Terry

TROUBLE

I felt bad when he died.
He got hit by a car.
He got 70-something stitches.
He was feeling bad.
he got better.
He was tough.

Travis Lark
Monforton School
Bozeman

EMBARRASSING MOMENTS

Embarrassment is tucking your dress in your panty hose at the Pizza Hut
Tucking your dress in your panty hose at the Pizza Hut is like having
your blouse pop open in Shop Class while starting an engine
Having your blouse pop open in Shop Class while starting an engine is like a
surprise visit to your bedroom by your mother
A surprise visit to your bedroom by your mother is embarrassment.

Janell Saltz
Belgrade High School
Belgrade

The hockey players are on
the ice. Isn't it so awkward
that we, the fragile children,
can go for such an incredible time
without a break, not freeze
or run out of energy. Frequently I stop
to wonder about the terrible things
we do. When we could be
out making money like our older friends,
but then I stop.
It is interesting enough
for me to let a goal
ease quietly by.

Brandy Thompson
Havre Jr. High
Havre

Skiing in the wide open
fast down from the top
snow flying off the drifts
wind blowing in the trees
frost building up on my skiis.
Cold—10 below—at the bottom.
Pulling hard back to the chair
Five riblets to go
to take me back
to the top again.

Kelly Kugler
Project for Alternative Learning
Helena

YVONNE

Yvonne, you're a special friend,
so nice, so neat, so understanding,
so friendly to all the sad.
Although sometimes I get mad,
I never hate you
quite as bad
as being without you.

Brenda Nelson
Graff Elementary
Laurel

Have you ever thought of diving,
a forward dive, a flip, a twist
a bellyflop? Pain, redness, aching
a splash huge as a hill, a tidal wave
driving people away. To sink like a stone
and sit at the bottom.

Chandin Wilson
Havre Jr. High
Havre

MORNING PRACTICE

The sun barely peeking over the horizon,
the morning dew on the grass.
Everybody walking slowly,
sulking, half asleep.

People talking
joking and getting dressed,
knowing that in another hour
we would all be quiet, tired.

We walk onto the field
still feeling the pain from the day before,
knowing that today would be worse.
Waiting, quietly.

Dey Obergewich
Wibaux High School
Wibaux

First I pulled myself through
a basketball game wondering which team
would get the greeting. I see me as
a galloping horse roaming through a bunch
of turkeys, but when I'm in football
I feel like the bait for a bunch
of muddy fish that haven't eaten
in years.

Shelley Shafford
Granville Stuart Elementary
Deer Lodge

JULIUS ERVING (DR. J.)

He glides.
He slides.
He jumps and shoots.
He jumps.
He dunks.
He walks on air.
The call him The Doctor,
Doctor of the hardwood floor.

Paul Hopfauf
Dawson County High School
Glendive

THE TRACK

Everything is so still and silent.
The grass is green and full of dew.
Slowly people start to come,
breaking the peaceful silence.
More and more people come,
each wearing their school colors.
The noise builds to a great commotion.
Around 9 o'clock the action begins.
Discus throwers flinging the discus onto the grass,
high jumpers hurling themselves up and over and onto red mats,
runners getting ready in their perfectly marked lanes,
the crowd growing silent as they wait for the race to begin.
After a long, hot day of confusion and excitement,
everybody leaves and the ground is strewn
with pop cans, candy wrappers and a few orange peelings.
Everything is still and silent.

Evonne Goroski
Dawson County High School
Glendive

poem smoem...

pink
and green
are
colors,
but
the
blue
grapefruit
is
ReALIty

Joe Certalic
Belgrade High School
Belgrade

A PENCIL FULL OF STARS

A pencil full of stars, all around
Mars, oh stars, oh stars, all around Mars.
One star swings on a hook. Some people
think you're big, but nobody knows
what size you are. Some people think
you're red, some think you're green,
but to me you're a sweet sixteen.
Summer's over and it's back
to school. But when next summer comes
we'll dance and play
like it just began.

Randy Patiner
Granville Stuart Elementary
Deer Lodge

1. The curtain is ugly.
   There is cheese smeared on the pillow.
   Mom asked the question,
   "Who left the marshmallow on the television?"
   The chipmunk got an early start and ate
   the dictionary, but he was only demonstrating
   how to eat your words.
2. I am ashamed of the cheese
   spoiling in the refrigerator.
   I can't stand the pickles.
   They are growing hair, and they've
   even begun to eat the jalapeno peppers.
   My house is alive, my television
   uses an umbrella. my curtain
   left early with a policeman.

Stacy Williams
E.F. Duvall Jr. High
Deer Lodge

WHAT IS GREEN?

Green is the color of new grass
shining with dew in the early spring.
Green is the trees starting to bud,
Green is the color of the big
train engines that race
top speed down the tracks.
Green is the color I dream.

Amy Douglas
Wibaux Elementary
Wibaux

RAG DOLL

I was born as a piece of cloth.
Then I was made into a rag doll.
It was fun at first
but it changed. I am old
and ragged now, dragged around so much
by children I was almost dead.
Then I changed into a person.
How good it feels. Now
I have a brain.

Dalayna Faught
West Elementary
Laurel

BARBIE DOLLS

Coming home from school
to only half a home.
Where's the rest?
Gone.
Burned, singed, black with smoke.

Walking around the charred trailer
and seeing the burnt clothes
all black from the fire
and soggy from the water.
Finally coming to two melted, distorted Barbie Dolls
lying molded to their van.

Slowly the warm tears trickled down my face
as I gazed at the scattered remains
of what had been my room.

Kim Adams
Dawson County High School
Glendive

WHAT IS BROWN

Brown is stale coffee
in the morning confusion
of the local cafe
Brown is the dirt on the sidewalks
of the big city.
Brown is the abandoned house
at the end of the road
Or when you dream of being
stranded in the dark forest
with brown all around, so tell me
what is brown?

Joey Diebert
Plains Middle School
Plains

SILVER

I like cars passing by
shining silver right in my eyes,
sparkles in the sea just sparkling.
Silver is my favorite color,
sparkles on a Christmas tree,
silver bell hanging high.

Tara Lee Douglas
Wibaux Elementary
Wibaux

When I walked in the barn
I saw her, shuddering, sick.
Dad says she won't make it,
we'll take the calf now.
The .22 cracks through the cold air
and her head sags slowly,
Cut her side open
Reach for the calf
warm, slick—
Where is it?
On the floor, hard and cold,
the calf lies unmoving;
blow in its mouth
one gasp of icy air.
Now another.

Debbie Solum
Blue Sky High School
Rudyard

ODE TO HORSES

For they run like the wind
For they glimmer like the sea
For they reflect the sun
  and could charm a Killer Bee
For they are as sweet and gentle
  as a tulip in Spring
For they shine and sparkle
  like diamonds
For, oh, I wish they were all
  mine

Janel Blakely
Grandey School
Terry

THE DAY MY DOG DIED

The day my dog died
it was hot in late April.
It was sad to hear that he died.
We put him in a coffin.
Then we buried him out on the hill.
We put flowers on him.
We kneeled and prayed to him.
I put a cross in front of the coffin.
I was suffering for a long time
before I got it out of my head.

John Kunz
Lambert Elementary
Lambert

ON THE DEATH OF A BROOD MARE

I saw her
lying quietly behind the trees
and I knew something was wrong.

Her dark velvet neck
was soaked with sweat, long-dried,
and her motionless body
showed the battered wear
of an all-night struggle.

There I found her,
asleep in eternal peace,
her innocent foal breached
between this world and that.

Jennifer Hartzhim
Bozeman Senior High
Bozeman

SUMMER SUN AT ARTIFACT CAMP

In awe, I held the arrowhead,
pottery shards sparkling black on sandy floor,
obsidian clues.
From khaki tents above
we tossed thoughts, as pine cones,
to the canyon echoes.
The bird-wing found, minus two feathers,
placed also on the tarpaulin canvas of fragments.

High above the sagebrush breeze
we climbed and clung, cliffside,
grasping for dirt and bristlecone roots
as hand-holds to the present.
Coming up from the ancient city,
father pushed papoose up the hill,
until, talons embedded in sandstone,
our feathered heads turned to imagine the view
mesas and kivas ago.

Noelle Sullivan
Bozeman Senior High
Bozeman

The sheep grazing
scraggy and weighted
with grimy wool.

The man walking
broad shoulders, cowboy hat,
dark stubble on his chin.

The cleavers opening,
a sharp ray of sun glares
off the smooth and deadly surface

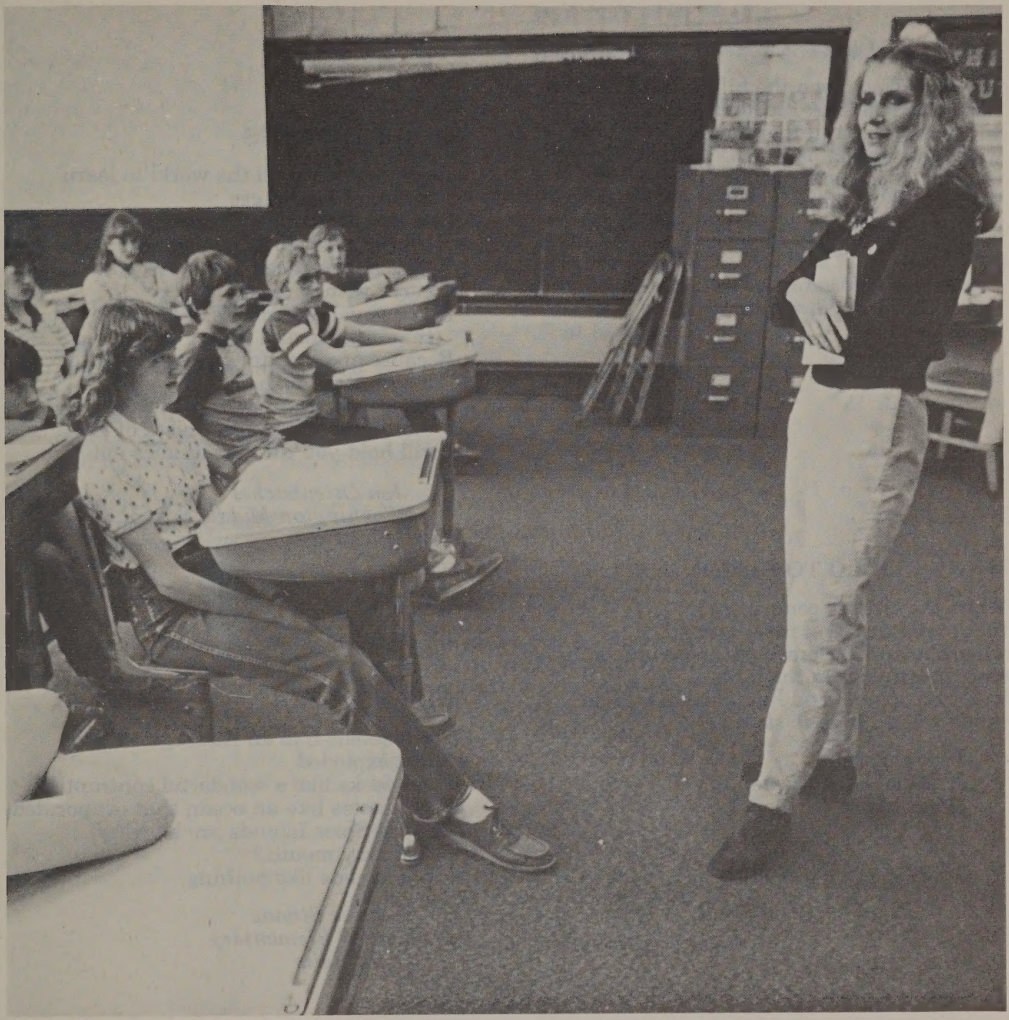
The sheep grazing
scrawny ribs and pink flesh.

Kelly Parker
C.M. Russell High School
Great Falls

ODE TO THE CORNFIELD

It stands like a pincushion
next to the pumpkins.
The stalks were tree trunks
and I was five.
We'd play hide and seek
beneath its branches.
The silk of the corn
was like a horse's mane.
Imitation tobacco
made green leaves of us all.
We blended in.

Veronica Hartman
Dawson County High School
Glendive



Pamela Uschuk

Courtesy of *Miles City Star*

THE DAY I MET A BEAR

As we walked down the hill, I could hear
the water running. It sounded like
wind howling, and the ground
was like walking on mush. Then suddenly
there it was, a bear sitting
by the river, fishing. I stiffened,
my heart pounding like a sledge hammer.
I grabbed my dad's hand.

Tammy Morhardt
H.C. Davis Elementary
Cut Bank

WHEN I'LL GO TO SLEEP

When the birches come alive,
their roots carrying them around,
when the ants become dogs, when the streams
stop flowing, when the birds
lose their wings, and humans grow them,
that's when I'll go to sleep.

Bryon Hufford
Meadow Lark Elementary
Great Falls

ODE TO STAMPS

Because you travel the world to learn
different languages
Because your bright colors break the
barrier to the blank envelope
Because your faces have covered the
earth with war and peace
Because your number's value is more
than a thousand words
Because of your fame, you make a
movie star blush
Because of collectors, you're worth
more than the biggest piece of gold
I will hold you till the sun dies out

Jon Ottenbacher
Washington Middle School
Miles City

ODE TO PIZZA

Pizza smells like an Italian food cart
just exploded
Pizza looks like a wonderful contraption
Pizza tastes like an ocean that evaporated
and the Spice Islands are blowing
up in my mouth.
Pizza sounds like nothing.

Spencee Stimac
Russell Elementary
Great Falls

ODE TO FOOTBALL

Because the ball is like a brown bomb ready
to pop.
Because the turf is like a green rug to burn
your skin.
Because the wet mud tastes as awesome as a
mouthful of sewage.
Because the locker room smells like an
oil refinery.
Because the hits sound like a bomb went off.
Because the stands look like a garbage dump.
Because the game's rough as running your
hand over 1000 sharp nails.
That is why I love football.

Clint Larsen
North Jr. High
Great Falls

OLD TENNIS SHOES

Dyed brown from mud
and dirt. Worn out and full of
holes. Written on like graffitti
on a wall. Broken shoelaces, stripes
falling off, cracked dried mud
and no traction.

Joe Younger
Anderson School
Bozeman

THE GIANT PEACH

Inside the giant peach James found
a great stone, all bumpy and rough.
He found a giant green grasshopper with musical talent,
a centipede who wore 21 pair of boots,
lied a lot, and was a pest,
a big, black she-spider who knew
how to spin a web of silk,
a silkworm who spun out threads
that James tied onto 502 seagulls,
a blind earthworm who worried
about being pecked to death by seagulls,
a glowworm whose bulb went out
when the big peach rolled,
and a ladybug who married a fireman.

Third Grade Collaborative
South Elementary
Laurel

ROOM 219

Thirty pairs of washed jeans
move toward assigned Formica seats
as the bell screams the beginning of period 4.
The muffled scrapes of pencils against paper,
random coughs punctuate the hum
of fluorescent lights.
Here and there a hand,
pink-polished or oil-stained,
waves tentatively in response to leading
questions. But I see the willow tree
on the other side of the glass,
its fragile, tentative buds
prophesying spring.

Jacqueline Mink, teacher
C.M. Russell High School
Great Falls

THE FLAG

If I were a flag
I would fly in the wind.
I would be made of silk.
I would be beautiful.
If it was still I wouldn't
flap in the wind.
If the President died
they would lower me
a little way down
the flagpole.

Kari Lynn Turner
Blue Sky Elementary
Rudyard

I look out my window
and into the field
to see the horses.
They look so pretty
you could stay there
for as long as you live
but they just move on.

Kendra Klein
W. K. Dwyer Primary
Anaconda

FISHING CYCLE POEM

A boy on the footbridge is a dancing colt
A dancing colt is a thunderstorm on a picnic
on the Fourth of July
A thunderstorm on a picnic on the Fourth of July
is a funeral in spring
A funeral in spring is a dirge at a Christening,
a Christening for the dancing boy on the bridge

David W. Dale, teacher
Ronan High School
Ronan

THE STREAM

Of all the memories of my past,
the happiest are the memories
of the old stream that meandered its way
among rocks and trees
in the ravine below our house.

I spent many an hour playing there,
wading in the knee-deep water,
gooey mud squishing between my toes,
catching minnows with a tiny net
and moving them to a new home further on.
And, oh, what an engineer I was,
building the most intricate dams
from sticks and stones.
But to no avail. The stream
always washed my dams away,
into the river and on to the sea.

Ross Bartholomay
Terry High School
Terry

The smoke is like an explosion
from the stack. All of a sudden
the sky turns black. Smoke pours
from it like ink
spilling all over a table.

Andy Clark
W.K. Dwyer Primary
Anaconda

THE RACCOON

I woke up one morning
high above the redwood trees
where everyone
has freedom.
I walked down
from eternity.
I had on a mask
I looked
like a shrunken
zebra
who had rolled
in the mud
and frolicked
in the oven.
I made it to a tree
as fast
as I could.
I was dazed
as a newborn fawn.
Who was I?
That was my dream.

Hallie Doran
Russell Elementary
Great Falls

Being in love is like soft petals of moonlight
Soft petals of moonlight are like diamonds rabbits dancing
Diamond rabbits dancing are like glistening crystals
Glistening crystals are like glowing red angels
Glowing red angels are like being in love

Lashell Kelton
Ronan High School
Ronan

Long days roll by like smoke
past houses, trees, dreams
and people, end somewhere
above the moon
as I scramble from class
to class, listening to words
and bells, words and bells,
words
and bells
walking home past drugstores,
bars, cafes, down alleys,
over the fence and across
a wet pasture
to sleep and dream
of words and bells.

Jim Symington
Ronan High School
Ronan

PIPES

On a cool summer night
when the moon is in the right
you can hear the pipes
from a pickup cruising.
You can almost think
that they are on your road.

Steve Lake
Lambert High School
Lambert

ODE TO TIME

Because of time, everyone is on a railroad
and can't get off
Because the rails go on and on in a large
circle and there is no end
Because the world and its people are programmed
to that cycle, all have it
Because there is no stopping place, many lose
it and don't use it
Because the ticking of a clock is like
days in our lives that pass in a blink of an eye
Because no person can stop it, we will
all be gone when it stops and we'll
get off and go into the station

Monte Baer
Ronan High School
Ronan

My grandmother wore feathers
in her hats, like the birds use
as they fly by, like the airplanes
and jets that fly by, leaving us in the dust,
and in the field the tractor cultivates
leaving a dark haze behind, just before
dark when the deer come into the field
to graze, like the cat of mine that tries
to sneak into the house all the time,
the house in which my grandmother died.

Craig Anderson
Sweet Grass County High School
Big Timber

IOWA

Every town seems the same.
Hot, humid, windless air,
neighbors talking about new fishing gear.
Farmers doing chores,
feeding hogs and milking cows.
Endless fields of corn
with stalks reaching skyward.
Dust from yellow limestone roads
hanging in the air.
From Dubuque to Council Bluff,
this is a great place
known as Iowa.

Tom Temple
Dawson County High School
Glendive

WALKING ON THE SKY

One day I was walking on the sky.
I sunk into clouds, the sun was bright,
and I felt like I was walking in air.

Orlean Wevley
H.C. Davis Elementary
Cut Bank

THE CLIMBER

As I come to the face, it
scowls at me angrily like
a spirit I'd suddenly see in the dark.

I unleash my ropes as if they could
kill me with the slightest mistake.

The touch of the cliff against my
bare skin is bold as the claws
of an eagle on a summer breeze.

Scaling carefully I could feel death
breathing its breath down my back.

As I get closer and closer to
my destination the fear grows
strong and more fierce than
an unchained dragon.

And suddenly dark clouds cover
the late afternoon sky as if it
could stop the entire existence
of my soul.

Aaron Knesal
North Jr. High
Great Falls

Together we enter a locker of time
where the simple amazement
of desire is as thick as night

wandering through a cave
of motion in search
of hope, light and names

to call the dark.

Maede Cattrell
Bozeman Senior High
Bozeman

waves of light
spill out of the sky
like ancient warriors
nameless ones
hawks of the
night sky

Kathy Hula
Bozeman Senior High
Bozeman

WEATHER CHART

A moody river
floods the bank
the dam overflowing
people whining
when they see
their houses go
under, when
fast water
flies by.
It is dangerous
to be happy
when floods
run.

Derek Von Heeder
Plains Middle School
Plains

I was just sitting there,
people pointing to a rope.
When I looked up I saw trees
running with the wind, clouds
floating like men in outer space.

Kevin Winterrowd
H.C. Davis Elementary
Cut Bank

I wish I had an Afro that was
ten feet thick
If I had an Afro that was ten feet
thick, I could make
a house four bedrooms big but
now I am a punk rocker
with rainbow hair.

Travis Goforth
Granville Stuart Elementary
Deer Lodge

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

Get down to the barities
The purities, the crystal
Black and white
Creation
A division of thoughts like myosis
You enter the darkness
But it is not always warm

The floor is cold
Wearing white
Or black
A contradiction of thought
He or she says
Or looks like
Or wears

Your creation is pushed out
into the light, and you hope
the audience will applaud.

And then the light
And the squeezing pain
Barefoot on the boards of the
Stage

Willard Knox
C.M. Russell High School
Great Falls

GRANDPA'S RANCH

Winds whip
Flying sands peel paint
and scratch the windows
of your eyes. Paints and
palominos huddle together
for protection
the sun beats
as the gate creaks shut,
the wind playing harmony.

Marci Vanni
C.M. Russell High School
Great Falls

ODE TO THE WILDERNESS

Because it's a rare ruby, wonderful but bleeding
Because it swoops down and takes away my thoughts
Because it stills my soul and takes away my fear
of the future
Because it is compassionate but unmerciful
Because it is cool, delightful, as quiet as a cathedral
Because it is everchanging, never still
Because it is my past and present and future

Melanie Shaw
Ronan High School
Ronan

The pond has frozen to a clear
solid mass. I slip on my skates
and steady myself as I rise.
Moving across the ice, a breeze blows
across my face, makes me feel
alive. The sound of the skates
slicing across the ice
is the only sound I hear.

Kristy Bakken
Wibaux High School
Wibaux

A MISCARRIAGE OF JUSTICE

A black cat lying in a feed trough.
I know it is wild, but it does not move.
Its eyes, black pits in a shadowy face.
Its legs, stiff from the cold.
A deer, dead in the snow,
its tongue lolling out, frozen from the cold.
An antelope, its hamstring cut,
with raking clawmarks across its gut.
Such are the laws of nature,
and cruel and harsh as they may be,
death gives way to the living,
a mixed blessing, as you may see.

Patrick Ferrell
Denton Jr. High
Denton

DREAMING OF DEATH

She's like a tree,
a child that starts reaching for the sky.
Up and up she grows
but before she's gone I say goodbye.
She fades away in the midnight sky.

Melissa Johnson
Grandey School
Terry

A UNICORN

A unicorn is soft as a caterpillar
  and as old as forever.
He has wings galore,
  wings that glow and are as shiny as snow.
He has a long white mane
  that is soft and furry.
His horn is long and sharp and pointed.
  It's curly and swirly and strange to see.
He flies through the glorious skies
  way up among the clouds.
He comes up out of the sunrise,
  settles up at dusk,
  and becomes part of a dream.

Collaborative Poem
Third and Fourth Grade
Denton Elementary
Denton

SOMETIMES

Sometimes I use words as weapons
to cut up hearts
and make blueberry tarts.
Nature is something.

Brad Herman
Graff Elementary
Laurel

THE WIND

I wish I were the wind
I would blow as far as the sun
I could eat gray clouds
Now I am a student
sitting in my desk, holding my breath.

Laura Leigh Sullivan
Bigfork Elementary
Bigfork

ART ROOM

The gassy smell flows
through the spacious grey air
and into my lungs,
drifting me
into another world,
the world of imagination
where cold, hard lead
evolves into warm, alluring life,
where art means freedom
and paint can be
whatever your brush
and your eyes can see.

Lisa Siders
Bozeman Senior High
Bozeman

When someone dies you feel that
you lost your love inside.

Gwen Nihart
Lambert Elementary
Lambert

Are there flowers in Greenland,
or is it just a hoax
a kind of spell
that makes you yell
a kind of mumbled "I do"
running down the aisle
throwing a bouquet?

Karyn Higgins
Havre Jr. High
Havre

Go inside an eagle
Soar above the clouds
For no one sees the world
Like an eagle on the wind

No more clear skies to fly in
Smog is your game
You love to pollute the earth
and let the acid reign

For as I soar above the clouds
Destruction is below
For you no longer live in peace
But are constantly at war

And so I say to you
two-legged creatures below
Why not destroy your world below
and leave my skies alone!

Lisa Todd
Belgrade High School
Belgrade

ODE TO VIDEO GAMES

Blam Blam Blam Blam Splat!
I don't like to blow my money
but when I see a game
Those flashing lights control me
just the same
Blam Blam Blam Blam Splat!
When I touch the buttons
I'm in a prison cell
I'm handcuffed to the joystick
And tangled in the cord
Blam Blam Blam Blam Splat!
Only when my pockets are flat
and the machine is fed
Can I go home

Steve Clark
Washington Middle School
Miles City

The cold air freezes my breath
and I grip my books tight.
Thrills of being first
to autograph the snow with my shoes.
Car exhaust stings my nose.
The snow sparkles like mounds of gems
as the sun slides down
I turn to see where I've
already been.
Ahead lies untouched snow.

Deanna Eder
Blue Sky High School
Rudyard

OWLS

Owls are as gray as bark
on a cottonwood tree.
Owls look at you like
your mom and dad do when
you are in trouble.

Jason Smith
Grandey School
Terry

ODE TO THE PACK OF WILD HORSES

What a sight to see:
a blur of rust, white and blue,
And to hear the neighs
which are soft as a Q-tip.
Then there's the thundering hooves
which are like a storm raging
in the valley. At night, everthing is silent
like a room in the desert.

Tony Quijano
Meadow Lark Elementary
Great Falls

ODE TO A GRASSHOPPER

Because
a grasshopper
is clean and small
like a tiny bubble
it looks like a miniature ski jumper
and it flies like a bird.
It is like a summer breeze
flying through the sky.

Matt Swanson
Bigfork Elementary
Bigfork

When I woke up I was a wolverine
as mean as a raging bear
As easy as yesterday's Social Studies test
As smart as an old owl
As fast as a mad panther
All of a sudden I was entrapped
I jumped. I hopped
and roared like a tiger
Finally I broke loose and
Killed seven bull elk
Finally I woke up out of a spell
My teacher yelled at me
QUIT DAY DREAMING!

Dustin Caldwell
Granville Stuart Elementary
Deer Lodge

FEEDING THE DOGS

They stand behind
begging.
Tails wag around and around,
like propellers on a plane
headed for unknown destinations.
They lick their whiskers
and drool puddles on the floor.
Then they dig in.
Gorging.
Like a plow into virgin dirt.

Joe Josephson
Sweet Grass County High School
Big Timber

BLACK PANTHER

I move swiftly as
a river on a
mountain top.
I am sleek,
coal black. I move
with great speed.
My eyes are like
diamonds that glow
in the night.
My roars can
be heard far
from sight, for
I am a Panther
who holds my head
up high.

Ronette Martin
Poplar High School
Poplar

CREATIVE WRITING RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS

Back issues of AMERICAN POETRY REVIEW. For a list of supplements devoted to poetry-in-the-schools (essays on teaching writing in various school situations and examples of student writing), write: AMERICAN POETRY REVIEW, 1616 Walnut Street, Room 305, Philadelphia, PA 19103.

BEING WITH CHILDREN: A HIGH-SPIRITED ACCOUNT OF TEACHING WRITING, THEATER, AND VIDEOTAPE. By Phillip Lopate. Doubleday, 1975. Bantam paperback.

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ROSE, WHERE DID YOU GET THAT RED? By Kenneth Koch. Teaching great poetry to children. Random House, 1973. Vintage paperback.

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THE TEACHER PAPER. "The only magazine to print only work by teachers." THE TEACHER PAPER, 2221 N.E. 23 Street, Portland, OR 97212.

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FIVE TALES OF ADVENTURE.

IMAGINARY WORLDS. By Richard Murphy.

THE POETRY CONNECTION. By Kinereth Gensler and Nina Nyhart. Contemporary poems and ideas to stimulate children's writing.

TEACHING AND WRITING POPULAR DICTION: HORROR, ADVENTURE, MYSTERY, AND ROMANCE IN THE AMERICAN CLASSROOM. By Karen Hubert.

TO DEFEND A FORM. Ardis Kimzey.

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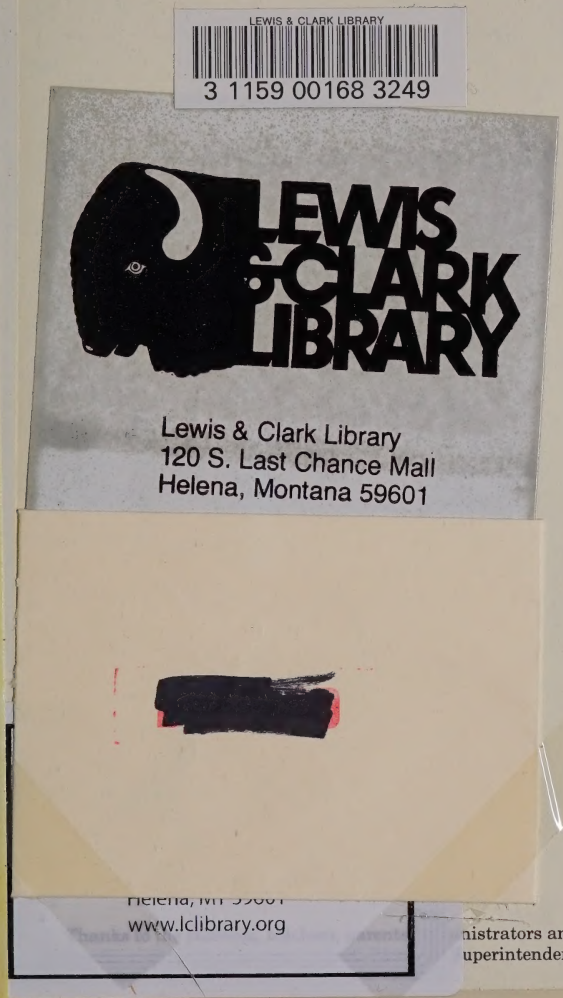

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